



Public Participation Plan

As a designated recipient of Federal Transit Administration funding, the Greenville Transit Authority d.b.a. Greenlink is required to perform public hearings. A written policy and procedures for the policy regarding the hearings is thereby necessary. The purpose of this plan is to outline procedures for conducting public hearings on changes made by the Greenville Transit Authority (GTA) to fare structure or service levels.

The public hearing is designed to obtain an understanding of the public's sentiment regarding a change in fare structure or changes to the services provided by GTA. Public hearings will be held when the following service change thresholds or fare change thresholds are met:

Fare Change Policy:

- Customer fares increase or decrease
- Fare products are introduced or eliminated
- The introduction of a new fare payment type or fare product result in fares increases, fare decreases, or fare product replacement

Major Service Change Policy:

- New routes are established
- Routes are eliminated
- There is a 20% or more reduction in miles, bus stops, or service hours

GTA is required to obtain and integrate public input into the decision-making process as related to the regulation of fares and changes to services in accordance with FTA regulations requiring the public hearings.

- Public hearings shall be of public record, open to all citizens of the communities where the transit system has its operations.
- Hearings will be held in ADA-accessible facilities that are also accessible by means of public transportation.
- GTA agrees to conduct public hearings in a manner congruent with federal regulations outlined in the FTA Master Agreement and U.S.C. Section 5307.
- There will be a minimum period of two weeks between the public notice of the public hearing and the actual hearing date.
- The window for accepting public feedback, especially as it relates to surveys/emails/phone calls, will be at least two weeks to allow sufficient lead time to provide comments.

- The public notice will be circulated to the area's media outlets (newspaper, radio, and television, etc.) and will include the correct date, time, location, and purpose of the hearing.
- All public hearings shall include an agenda and minutes summarizing the presentation/material will be made available to the public in a timely fashion. All hearings will include opportunities for staff to explain the nature of the proposed changes in service or fares, detail the reasoning behind the proposed change, and allow members of the public to express their views on the proposed change.
- Staff will take the views expressed by the citizens who spoke at the public hearing into consideration and make its final recommendations to GTA for a proper discussion and vote on the changes to the transit service. Summaries of public input received at the meetings, via surveys, or phone/email communication will be presented to the GTA and available to the public.
- Additional public hearings may be convened if it is determined that there is a need to do so.

GTA will make all efforts to include minority and limited English proficient (LEP) populations in all such meetings by:

- Posting meeting notices on transit vehicles, at bus shelters, and in the transfer terminal.
- Posting meeting notices on GTA/Greenlink's website. Sending notices to Greenlink's newsletter subscribers.
- Posting meeting notices to Greenlink's customer apps and electronic ticketing users.
- When applicable, sending notices through traditional mail service.
- Using social media and online advertising.
- Disseminating meeting notices to minority and LEP interest groups.
- With advance notice of seven (7) calendar days, provide *interpreter services* at public meetings (as resources are available). *Interpreter services* offered include foreign language and hearing impaired.
- With advance notice of seven (7) calendar days, provide *translation services* at public meetings (as resources are available). *Translation services* offered include foreign language, large print, and Braille accommodations to printed documents and materials.
- Explaining details using maps and visual aids whenever possible to increase understanding. Collecting feedback through means other than written communication when possible.

GTA/Greenlink staff members will preside over the public hearing. These staff members will be in charge of:

- Planning an outreach and communications timeline to notify the media and public of the input process and meeting dates/locations.
- Securing of a venue for the public hearing.
- Preparing the meeting agenda, meeting materials that are necessary to display the details being discussed at the meeting, and summary of public input received at the meeting.
- Present public feedback to the GTA and incorporate input in final recommendations.
- Any other activities associated with the hearing that is not mentioned in the above duties.