



Faribault - Martin County Transit Board Transit Public Participation Plan

The goals of the Prairie Lakes Transit Public Participation Plan are twofold. First, to ensure early, continuous, and broad public notification about and participation in major actions and decisions by Prairie Lakes Transit and second, to get meaningful public input to inform the decision making process. This plan establishes consistent, minimum procedures to accomplish these goals; procedures beyond these minimums may be applied as warranted and are encouraged.

The term "major" is to be applied loosely. If a proposed action or decision is clearly a normal course-of-business activity that does not significantly affect the public or alter public policy, it may not be necessary to apply these procedures. But, if there is a question as to whether these procedures should be followed, then the agency should follow them to ensure appropriate public notification and participation. However, failure to exactly comply with these procedures shall not, in and of itself, render any decisions or actions invalid.

Prairie Lakes Transit's Desired Outcomes for its Public Participation:

1. To get public input on Prairie Lakes Transit's activities and Decisions.
2. To share information with a broad cross-section of the public.
3. To ensure notification and participation of traditionally underserved populations
4. To increase overall awareness of regional planning activities

This Transit Public Participation Plan will be reviewed periodically for its effectiveness.

Principles to Help Guide Prairie Lakes Transit's Public Participation Activities:

1. No major public policy decision is reached or large project implemented without significantly affecting someone.
2. Professionals do not have a monopoly on good solutions.
3. Even if a project or policy decision is sensible and beneficial, it must be arrived at properly to be acceptable.
4. People are much more willing to live with a decision that affects different interests unequally if the decision-making process is open, objective and considers all viewpoints.
5. If project or policy staff don't provide all relevant information necessary for an informed decision, the public will rely on -- and trust -- others.
6. Interacting with an official representative of an organization or group is no substitute for interacting directly with that organization or group.
7. Effective public notification and participation takes time and effort, and can be expensive, yet is essential to sound decision-making.

Public Notification and Participation Procedures

A variety of public notification and participation procedures will be used to encourage the early and continuous involvement of citizens, jurisdictions, communities and other interests in the planning process and the decisions and actions of Prairie Lakes Transit. Ample notice on key decision making opportunities will be provided to the public.

Prairie Lakes Transit will continue to incorporate additional outreach efforts, beyond what is listed here. Procedures for meeting fundamental public participation requirements are established in the following sections: Meetings, Publications, Key Decisions and Activities, and Additional Outreach Efforts.

The Faribault - Martin County Transit Board Transit Advisory Committee is on call for meetings as needed and the public is welcome to attend. The meeting schedule is available on the Prairie Lakes Transit's at <http://www.PLTransit.com>. Community members have an opportunity to comment and speak at the open meetings.

If you wish to have an issue brought before the Transit Advisory Committee or the Faribault - Martin County Transit Board of Commissioners, please contact the Faribault - Martin County Transit Board Director's Office during normal business hours

(Monday-Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm) at the Martin County Courthouse by phone (507-238-3128), or by e-mail (jeremy.monahan@co.martin.mn.us). Comments on pending issues will be accepted at any time. The Faribault - Martin County Transit Board system maintains a website about its programs and activities at <http://www.PLTransit.com>, it contains announcements about upcoming events and meetings.

Key Decisions and Actions

At key decision points, Prairie Lakes Transit will provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.

Efforts to fulfill this requirement will include opportunities for interested parties to be involved in the early stages of plan, program, and policy development. These efforts may include publications, workshops, open houses, visualization techniques, or participation in other public forums or methods to provide opportunities for the public to learn about and participate in plan, program, and policy development.

These efforts will include publication of appropriate documents, public notice of availability of such documents, and/or other methods to make them available for public review. They also will include notice as to where to send written comments, and who at the agency will receive written comments and can provide additional information. Public comments received will be summarized and presented to the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) and/or the Faribault - Martin County Transit Board of Commissioners. As part of these efforts, Prairie Lakes Transit will proactively seek out and consider the needs of people traditionally under served by transportation systems.

Additional Outreach Efforts

Prairie Lakes Transit will also conduct additional outreach efforts as appropriate to provide public opportunities for comment, suggestions, ideas and concerns. This may include workshops, open houses, forums, and other events. Prairie Lakes Transit will also encourage public comment and participation through advisory committees, presentations to civic groups, and other efforts as appropriate.