



Greater Des Moines AA Study

Public Involvement Plan

**Prepared for:
Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority**

**Prepared by:
Jane Mobley and Associates**

**Under Contract to:
DMJM Harris**

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**Draft Public Involvement Plan
 Alternatives Analysis Study
 DMJM/DART**

Background

The primary purpose of the **Alternatives Analysis (AA)** for the **Greater Des Moines area** is to identify and build consensus for appropriate actions to meet transportation needs and address transportation problems in the study area.

The information obtained through this objective analysis will allow the community and project partners to make informed choices about building transportation infrastructure and reach a broad consensus on the types of improvements that will support and sustain future growth and development in the Greater Des Moines area.

Broad consensus is important and implementation of a wide-reaching participatory public outreach and education process is key to the success of the AA.

Public Involvement Team Organization

The PI Team, working closely with Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) staff, is responsible for guiding public involvement activities and ensuring that the project objectives are achieved. Jane Mobley Associates has designated the following members of the consultant’s public involvement team and key task leaders to manage and coordinate community engagement activities during the study:

Project Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally held information, whether technical or cultural, will be captured and utilized, and will contribute to a more comprehensive study. • Public participation in this and future phases will contribute to a satisfactory study outcome. • Stakeholder support for future study and project activities will be enhanced. • The study will encounter fewer obstacles to a successful and timely completion.

Public Involvement Team	
Project Manager –Ken Sislak Deputy Project Manager – David Veights PI Coordinator –Jake Potter Staff –Neeli Langdon Staff – Ryan Snelson	Senior Consultant/Facilitation – Julie MacLachlan / Kelly Reinhardt QA/QC –Jane Mobley Web hosting –DART Webmaster Graphics –Vivian Strand / Brian Clark

Planning

The consultant team will organize a public involvement planning workshop to develop the formalized public involvement plan, further develop public involvement goals and objectives and identify key stakeholders as well as establish roles and responsibilities, develop a project identity and clarify expectations.

Public Involvement Goals and Objectives

The PI Team identified a number of goals and objectives to guide PI efforts throughout the study. Below are the goals and objectives identified by the PI Team.

Goals

- Ensure that constituencies affected by activities in the study area (stakeholders) are given the opportunity and knowledge to participate in the study process.
- Present the study in a way that minimizes opposition and optimizes opportunity.
- Ensure that decision-makers at various levels who have the potential to influence the study or any subsequent work are involved and encouraged to participate in a substantive way in the work of the study.
- Ensure that all stakeholders or any third parties examining the record are left with the sense that public involvement opportunities were frequent and substantive.
- Ensure that activities of key project personnel contribute to a healthy exchange of ideas and information between and among stakeholders.
- Ensure that traditionally underserved populations have access to the process.

Objectives

- Locally held information, whether technical or cultural, will be captured and utilized and will contribute to a more comprehensive study.
- Public participation will contribute to a satisfactory study outcome.
- Stakeholder support for future study and project activities will be enhanced.
- The study will encounter fewer obstacles to a successful and timely completion.

Guiding Strategies

Beyond goals and objectives, other strategies should guide the work of the project. The following strategies describe the methods by which the team members will reach the project objectives.

- Conduct personalized contact with potentially affected stakeholders and groups.
- Maximize the use of existing organizations and communication channels, including mass media.
- Provide multiple opportunities and means for meaningful and substantive input.
- Maintain open and transparent communication with project team members, stakeholders and the media.
- Exercise responsive and responsible communication, sending clear and consistent messages.
- Avoid confusion with other efforts and be prepared to discuss how other efforts relate to the Alternatives Analysis Study.

Key Stakeholders and Audiences

A number of audiences will be utilized for input and included in the project decision-making process. In general, these audiences include:

- Residents
- Business owners
- Public elected officials
- Civic and community groups
- Neighborhood groups
- Business associations
- Chambers of commerce
- Planning organizations
- Municipalities
- Economic development groups/agencies
- Environmental groups/organizations

In addition to these external audiences, it will be important to inform and involve internal audiences of project activities. Internal audiences include DART employees.

Communication and Media Protocols

There are many individuals included in PI efforts for each section. This situation holds the potential for confusion and conflicting information among the public.

Therefore, it is essential that communications and media protocols be well understood and rigorously followed by all PI team members. Doing so will ensure that contacts with the public, media and public officials will be appropriately responded to, tracked and recorded. All public comments and questions will be directed to the official contact points.

Contact name: Brian Litchfield, Director
Address: Des Moines Area Regional Transit
1100 MTA Lane
Des Moines, IA
p: (515) 283-5007
f: (515)-283-8135
e: blitchfield@ridedart.com
Web site: www.ridedart.com

Below are protocols for handling communication from the public and media. In general, all written and verbal communications should be referred to Brian Litchfield. Project team members are able to answer public questions and discuss study issues within their area of expertise. Any questions that cannot be answered should be referred to the Project Manager or the Deputy Project Manager. However, all communications must be forwarded to JMA to be tracked and recorded.

For written questions or comments:

The written comment should be immediately forwarded to JMA via fax or pdf email attachment to the attention of the PI Coordinator. The original correspondence should be immediately forwarded to JMA via mail to the attention of:

Jake Potter
Jane Mobley Associates
116 West 3rd Street, Suite 102
Kansas City, MO 64105

For verbal questions or comments:

Project Team members should answer general questions and those of a technical nature. Policy questions (those dealing with funding and other DART issues) should be directed to Brian Litchfield.

For policy level questions, inform the person that another member of the project team will be in touch shortly to address their question or concern. Contact JMA by telephone to alert them of the need for a call back.

Immediately send an email to the PI Coordinator and copy Brian Litchfield with the following information (this should be done for ALL CONTACTS, even those involving a simple exchange of established information):

- Date and time the contact was made
- Name and telephone number of the person making the contact
- Issues discussed
- Action that was requested (if any)

Media Inquiries

Media contact during the project process will be managed by Brian Litchfield. It is particularly important that any contact from a member of the news media be IMMEDIATELY forwarded to:

Jake Potter
Jane Mobley Associates
116 West 3rd Street, Suite 102
Kansas City, MO 64105

No project personnel or project subconsultants should provide any project-related information to the media unless directed to do so by Brian Litchfield, Ken Sislak or David Veights. In the event that a member of the team receives a call from the media, the following action should be taken:

- Courteously inform the media representative that all inquiries about the project should be directed to Brian Litchfield of DART.
- Provide Brian Litchfield's direct telephone number.
- Immediately send an e-mail to Jake Potter and copy David Veights with the following notes:

- the date and time the contact was made
- the name and telephone number of the media representative making the contact
- the information that was requested (if any)

In most cases, Brian Litchfield will handle inquiries from the media. There may be cases where Brian asks project personnel or project subconsultants to follow-up with media representatives. In such cases, the follow-up will be undertaken through electronic correspondence so that a record may be maintained.

Review and Approval Process

All communication related information and materials will be reviewed and approved by DART before being released to the public or the media. This is true of ALL written materials, exhibits, electronic products, etc.

In general, the PI Team will be the agent through which all review and approval is coordinated. Prior to seeking project Management Team approval, the PI Team will ensure that materials have received appropriate review. Review times will vary according to the material in question, but in general, production schedules will be built to allow a two-day project technical review and three-day DART review and approval.

PI Planning Tools

The role of public involvement is to give the community a voice in the planning process and help them understand how their input will be used. The DMJM Harris – JMA team will focus on an approach to assist in soliciting input on alternatives and evaluation criteria and ensure stakeholders are engaged early and throughout the study process.

The PI Team will prepare presentation materials and assist in promoting and conducting information and input meetings; prepare and distribute public information collateral materials; and document all public and agency comments and input and respond to public questions and comments, as needed.

Public Involvement Planning Workshop

The consultant will organize a public involvement planning that will involve the consultant and key client representatives. The goal of the initial workshop is to develop the formalized public involvement plan, including goals and objectives, and to identify key stakeholders.

Public Involvement Plan

The planning workshop will primarily be utilized to develop the details of the public involvement plan and schedule. In coordination with the client, the consultant will develop a plan that will serve as the master schedule and work plan for all public involvement activities, including public meetings, updates, stakeholder outreach and coordination. The public involvement plan will be closely coordinated with the technical work program and schedule.

Develop Goals, Objectives and Guiding Strategies

The consultant and client will formalize the goals and objectives that guide the community engagement activities during the project. The goals will demonstrate the consultant and client's transparent, open decision-making process and commitment to consensus building. Objectives will be oriented to both the project and the processes that must be followed to complete the project.

Key Stakeholders

The consultant will coordinate with the client to identify key audiences that will be tapped for input and included in the project decision-making process. Although the ultimate goal of the public involvement program is to try and reach everyone impacted, a scatter-shot approach is unlikely to be effective. Audiences react best not to general information, but rather information that emphasizes their concerns and issues.

The public involvement activities will be tailored to reach key audiences in the community, with slight (or, in some cases, major) changes in message depending on the perceived needs of each audience.

Project Identity Program

The Greater Des Moines Alternatives Analysis Study must be considered by the public as one large project, distinct from other area transportation initiatives.

Project Logo

The consultant will utilize DART's new logo in all project communication materials including fax cover sheets, letterhead and other materials that may be viewed by the public as directed.

Study Area Advisory Committee Meetings

A Study Area Advisory Committee will be formed to meet approximately 3 to 5 times during the study. The Committee may include elected/appointed officials, Chambers of Commerce, business owners, residents, church officials, school officials, or other active members of the general public. The consultant will work with the client to identify these critical players and recruit those individuals for active participation in the group.

The consultant will prepare for and participate in a series of facilitated input group meetings with the Committee to discuss the progress of the study and to obtain feedback critical to the decision-making process. No more than five (5) meetings will be conducted. The consultant will be responsible for coordinating with the group members, confirming the location, developing the agenda and meeting materials, facilitating the discussion during the meeting and providing follow-up documentation.

Project Newsletters

The consultant will arrange for publication and distribution of a project brochure to key area stakeholders and other recipients as designated by the client. The consultant

recommends the brochure be completed and ready for distribution prior to initial public meetings and community interactions. The fee estimate does not reflect potential direct expenses related to postage or printing/production at this time.

The consultant will prepare the newsletter in electronic Adobe (pdf) format for distribution electronically. Not only does this free up project resources that would otherwise be used for printing, it creates a growing database of individuals who have been shown to have an active interest in the project and who can receive communications electronically.

Fact Sheets

Fact sheets are quick news briefs that explain the who, what, when, where, why and how of the project. Fact sheets may accompany press releases or may function as stand alone pieces. Fact sheets will be two sided, 8.5" x 11", 2/2 color, and produced in quantities of up to 500 per issue. Fact sheets will be made available at appropriate study activities, such as public meetings and community interactions.

The consultant will produce one fact sheet that will be a general information piece and will be published at the beginning of the project. Internet-ready versions of the fact sheets will be provided in Adobe (pdf) format.

Public Meetings

The consultant will be responsible for establishing guidelines and standards by which public meetings will be conducted, including developing a comprehensive task list with responsibilities and deadlines for all activities leading up to and including the public meetings.

The consultant will be responsible for all public notices and advertising and logistics for the meetings, including meeting locations, any necessary audiovisual equipment, exhibit boards, staffing needs and refreshments. The consultant will provide written summaries and other appropriate documentation of the meetings. An open house format will be utilized for the public meetings.

No more than four (4) public meetings will be conducted over the course of this study.

Web development

The consultant will provide materials that can be incorporated on DART's Web site.

Create Project E-Mail Link

An e-mail link (i.e., AAStudy@DART.org) will be created in conjunction with DART's Web site. Incoming comments and questions will be taken and forwarded for appropriate response then logged accordingly. E-mail inquires will be acknowledged upon receipt and responded to substantively.

Media relations

The consultant will develop a series of press releases, in coordination with the client, to area media outlets as project milestones occur during the course of the study.