



Public Participation Program Operating Procedures

Issuing Dept: Transit Operations/Planning
Division of Strategic Planning

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PROCEDURES

In accordance with the LYNX Public Participation Program Policy, these Administrative Operating Procedures have been developed to ensure proper public input to the development and implementation of LYNX mobility services. There are two types of activities for which procedures are established:

1. Activities that require public participation based on Federal and/or State regulations; and
2. Activities that LYNX desires public participation in as part of its overall strategy to provide market driven transportation services.

In executing this policy, LYNX will publish in a newspaper of general circulation in both English and Spanish, a notice of activities that impact LYNX' riding and non-riding customers. Notice will be published at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the time when the activity is to be implemented. The notice shall include:

1. The proposed activity(ies);
2. Address and business hours whereby information regarding the activity(ies) is available for public review;
3. Availability of opportunities to verbally comment regarding one or more of the activities during the regularly schedule Board Meeting and/or any special meeting;
4. A period of time in which the public may comment on the proposed activity(ies);
5. A contact address for the submission of written comments related to the activity(ies); and
6. Contact information to arrange special accommodations.

Where appropriate, LYNX will proactively solicit public participation on one or more than one activity so long as there is at least twenty-one (21) days before any one of the activities are to be implemented. Any public request for a hearing or comment on a particular activity will have no bearing on implementation of any other activity(ies).



Public comments on LYNX activities will be considered in the entirety and will be packaged for the LYNX Board of Directors and presented by staff at a regularly scheduled LYNX Board of Directors meeting prior to implementation of any action.

Public Hearing Guidelines:

Public Hearings to solicit public comment will be automatically held under the following circumstances:

1. When required by Federal or State regulations;
2. When service reductions take place such that any of the following conditions are met:
 - a. An entire route or set of routes are eliminated with the exception of planned service development or experimental service in existence for less than 2 years.
 - b. Any service reduction impacting more than 25% of an individual route's total service hours, as determined by the Service Planning Manager in coordination with the Title VI Officer.
 - c. When passenger fares and/or fare media are proposed to be raised beyond current pricing levels. This includes all LYNX services requiring a fare.
3. Once annually to review the Program of Projects.

Public hearings will be subject to the same notice provisions as indicated above. All public comments, written and oral, will be presented to the LYNX Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled meeting before final action on the activity(ies) is taken. Below are specific activities that warrant public involvement for the two types of activities.

Fare Increase – Required Activities:

Fixed route fare increases are increases in the base system, full adult fare. When the full fare is increased, discount fares, fare media, premium services and paratransit fares may also be increased at the same time. LYNX staff will evaluate information such as revenue forecasts, expected shortfalls and fare studies to determine if a fare increase is warranted. Once the fare increase process is initiated, LYNX shall proceed with public notification of the proposed fare increase, following Title VI requirements. Once initiated, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is to conduct the following activities to solicit public input:

1. Prepare notices in the form of press releases in both English and Spanish, and on-board bus cards and flyers for paratransit vehicles in both English and Spanish.

2. Schedule a public hearing(s).
3. Notice of public hearing in accordance with Public Notices Procedures below.
4. Hold public hearing(s) to gain public input.

Other Activities Related to Fare Increase – Not Required:

When deemed appropriate and reasonable, the CEO may also elect to conduct other activities to solicit public comment, including but not limited to:

1. Hold public workshops in communities affected by the fare increase.
2. Make presentations to elected officials and local jurisdictions.
3. Make presentations to business and community groups.
4. Publicize the fare increase through marketing promotions on radio and television stations in both English and Spanish.

Service Reductions – Required Activities:

Service Reductions occur when LYNX does the following to an individual route or set of routes:

1. Reduces service by more than 25% of an individual route's total service hours.
2. Eliminates a route altogether, unless the route is a service development or experimental service or has not been in existence for more than 2 years.

Public participation is required if any of the above activities impact more than 25% of an individual route's total service hours as determined by the Service Planning Manager in coordination with the Title VI Officer. When the CEO deems that one or both of the criteria have been met, the following activities shall occur:

1. Prepare notices in the form of press releases and notices via on-board bus cards in both English and Spanish.
2. Schedule a public hearing(s).
3. Notice of Public Hearing in accordance with Public Notice Procedures listed below.
4. Hold a public hearing(s) to gain public input.

Other Activities Related to Service Reductions – Not Required:

When deemed appropriate and reasonable, the CEO may also elect to conduct other activities to solicit public comment, including but not limited to:

1. Hold public workshops in communities affected by the service reduction.

2. Make presentations to elected officials and local jurisdictions.
3. Make presentations to business and community groups.
4. Publicize the service reduction through marketing promotions on radio and television stations in both English and Spanish.

LYNX Program of Projects (Capital Investments) – Required Activity:

Capital investment and/or improvement projects shall be programmed in the annual update of the LYNX Transit Development Plan (TDP) and/or budget workshops, the Orlando Urbanized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and METROPLAN ORLANDO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MPO provides a process for early consultation and public participation to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties and local jurisdictions concerns. METROPLAN ORLANDO presents all key issues to its Transportation Technical Committee, Citizen Advisory Committee, and Municipal Advisory Committee, which are comprised of jurisdictional staff, private citizens and elected officials in the urban area. Public hearings are also held on the Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program prior to adoption by the MPO. The MPO's public participation activities will be in compliance with METROPLAN ORLANDO's most current Public Involvement Program.

The LYNX public participation process in the form of public workshop(s) for capital investments/improvements will be as follows:

1. Once annually, LYNX will develop a Program of Projects (POP) also known as the Transit Action Plan (TAP), proposed to be funded with Federal, State and Local funding. The TAP will be incorporated into the TDP.
2. LYNX will publish notice of the POP's availability in a newspaper of general circulation in both English and Spanish. The publication will also solicit public feedback on the POP.
3. The POP will be adopted by the LYNX Board of Directors as part of the Transit Development Plan, which provided for additional public comment.
4. The POP shall then be submitted to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for incorporation into the Work Program and the MPO for incorporation into the TIP.
5. The MPO then completes a public involvement process that includes consulting with technical and citizens committees, holding a public hearing, and final adoption by the MPO Board.

Public comments received on the POP or TIP will be considered by LYNX throughout the adoption process and incorporated into final programs.



Public Notice:

When formal public notice is warranted for public hearings, LYNX shall publish notice at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the proposed action(s). Notice shall be published in newspapers of general circulation and shall be published in English and Spanish in compliance with Executive Order 13166 Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Based on ethnicity information derived from semiannual ridership surveys conducted by staff or contracted agents under the direction of the Marketing Department, whether another language is utilized by a minimum of 20% of riders, notice shall also be published in that language. Upon request, accommodations will be made for information or notice to be provided in additional languages other than English and Spanish, as well as other accessible formats in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Should the hearing be for the purpose of route reduction, LYNX may opt to assign staff, where deemed appropriate and available, to act as “living alerts” and notify the public of the hearing and to distribute comment cards. This will be considered optional and is not part of the overall policy and procedure. The notice shall include:

1. Purpose of the public hearing.
2. The date, time and location of the public hearing.
3. Address and business hours whereby information regarding the action can be available for public review.
4. Contact address and period of time which written public comments will be received, and;
 - a. Contact telephone number for the public to gain additional information.
 - b. Contact information for persons needing special accommodations.

After the public hearing(s) and at the conclusion of the public comment period, the CEO shall direct staff to summarize and package all public comments for presentation to the LYNX Board of Directors at least one week prior to the time action is to be taken.

Public hearings conducted by the LYNX Board of Directors shall be at regularly scheduled monthly meetings that are published each year for the following year. Public hearings by staff may be conducted at any time based on the impacts to a particular community or customer base. Notice provisions for Public Hearings shall be the same as those indicated above.

Whenever applicable, all public comments received through any of the means listed above will be summarized and presented to the LYNX Board of Directors prior to adoption or implementation of the action taken.

Public Comments:

It is LYNX desire to solicit public input regarding mobility services, amenities, routing, fare structure and fare media. In order to maximize the public's opportunity to comment and become part of the official public record, LYNX will implement the following public comment procedure:

1. The public comment period will encompass the date of the initial advertisement and until twenty-one days after the date of the final workshop(s) or hearing(s).
2. Comments will be afforded:
 - a. Via the LYNX website at www.golynx.com.
 - b. In person at the workshop(s) or hearing(s).
 - c. Via comment cards available in both English and Spanish.
 - d. To a Customer Service Representative by calling (407) 841-5969 during regular Customer Service business hours or TTY at (407) 423-0787 for our hearing impaired customers.
 - e. Via regular mail or delivery service.
3. If part of an affected route or a particular service area is served by a population of 20% or more that speak a language other than English or Spanish, comment cards will be made available in that language.
4. LYNX Staff, under the direction of the CEO, will compile and package all comments to be reviewed by the LYNX Board of Directors no later than one week prior to the LYNX Board of Directors meeting.
5. The public is also afforded the opportunity to comment on all proposed actions taken by the LYNX Board of Directors at their regularly scheduled meeting.

Public Outreach Activities:

Public outreach is not required but desired by LYNX and may take various forms and be tailored to the specific activity involved. Public outreach activities are designed to increase public awareness of LYNX, determine public attitudes regarding the Authority's progress, and to gain public consensus and support for the importance of public transportation to the quality of life in the region. LYNX will seek to maintain a comprehensive and continuous public participation outreach effort to include, but not limited to:

1. Annual Transit Development Plan (TDP) – Public workshops will be held in all three service counties and held prior to the TDP finalization for major update years to seek public input on the projects proposed for funding. Minor update years shall solicit public input through a newspaper advertisement and at LYNX Board meetings.

2. MPO Coordination – This includes participation by the MPO Committees, MPO Board Meetings, and presentations when appropriate to the Citizens Advisory Committee.
 - a. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Annual coordination with MPO.
 - b. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Annual submission of proposed planning projects to be funded in the UPWP.
 - c. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Participation and input into the development of multi-modal transportation system.
3. Speakers Bureau
 - a. Includes presentations by key LYNX staff to community groups, chambers of commerce, business organizations, elected officials, and neighborhood/community associations. Speakers Bureau presentations may also be requested at large.
4. Information Awareness Program
 - a. Includes marketing promotions targeted toward promoting the LYNX image in the community to riding and non-riding customers.
 - b. LYNX has revised the individual schedules and schedule books to include a statement advising that LYNX operates programs without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender or disability.
5. Internet/Web Access
 - a. E-mail over the internet that will be retrieved and responded to by LYNX staff. The LYNX web site, www.golynx.com, is currently accessible providing information on LYNX services, policies, projects, job opportunities and more.
 - b. LYNX has posted a statement on our website advising that LYNX operates programs without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, or disability.
6. LYNX Committees – Committees will allow LYNX to receive governmental and citizen input on the business of LYNX. The input and shared information through these committees will provide additional knowledge throughout the community of LYNX activities and processes. Outreach activities through committees will include any additions and can also cease when committees are no longer in existence.
 - a. Transit Advisory Committee – Committee comprised of disabled users and their advocates to represent the views of persons with disabilities.
 - b. Regional Working Group – Planning members from funding partners review technical data and provide input to LYNX on transit related issues such as service development and growth



management. It also serves as a forum for LYNX staff to become more active with the local transportation development process.

7. Annual Budget – Public workshops in the form of presentations to the LYNX funding partners and the LYNX Board of Directors engage citizens in an interactive process of balancing service needs with budget constraints. The workshops will provide a forum for the public to voice their needs and concerns and gather a better understanding of the LYNX budgeting process. LYNX will publish in a newspaper of general circulation, the regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting at which time the proposed budget will be presented. The public will be given the opportunity at the Board of Directors meeting to comment on the proposed budget.

Security:

LYNX takes the safety and security of the public and its employees very seriously. In an effort to circumvent any disruptive or potentially harmful situations, LYNX will procure the services of an off-duty law enforcement officer to be present at all public hearings. Law enforcement officers will be uniformed and will be from the law enforcement agency of the jurisdiction in which the hearing(s) is being held.