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## Public Participation Plan

# Long Range Transportation Plan

Prepared for:

**Oklahoma Department of Transportation**

Prepared by:

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The Technical Memos were written to document early research for the 2015-2040 Oklahoma Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Most of these memos were written in 2014; all precede the writing of the 2015-2040 Oklahoma LRTP *Document* and 2015-2040 Oklahoma LRTP *Executive Summary*.

The 2015-2040 Oklahoma LRTP *Document* and 2015-2040 Oklahoma LRTP *Executive Summary* were composed in Spring 2015.

If there is an inconsistency between the Tech Memos and the 2015-2040 Oklahoma LRTP *Document* or 2015-2040 Oklahoma LRTP *Executive Summary*, the reader should assume that the *Document* and *Executive Summary* contain the most current and accurate information.



## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
1.1	Public Participation in Statewide Planning .....	1-1
1.2	Federal Regulations Concerning Public Participation .....	1-2
1.2.1	Federal Public Participation Requirements under SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21 .....	1-2
1.2.2	Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.....	1-2
1.2.3	Executive Order on Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898, February 11, 1994).....	1-3
1.2.4	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 .....	1-3
1.2.5	Executive Order on Limited English Proficiency (Executive Order 13166, August 11, 2000) .....	1-3
<b>2</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>KEY AUDIENCES .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION METHODS.....</b>	<b>4-2</b>
4.1.1	Communication Methods/Tools .....	4-3
4.2	Development of Advisory Committees .....	4-3
4.3	Development of Project Website .....	4-4
4.3.1	Purpose and Objectives .....	4-4
4.3.2	Content and Maintenance .....	4-4
4.3.3	Promotion.....	4-5
4.4	Public Open Houses .....	4-5
4.4.1	Forums/Venues.....	4-5
4.4.2	Promotion.....	4-5
4.5	Response to Public Comment.....	4-5
4.6	Other Forms of Public Communications.....	4-6
4.6.1	Contact/Emailing List.....	4-6
4.6.2	Press Releases and Public Notices .....	4-6
4.6.3	Other Print Material .....	4-6
4.6.4	Public Affairs Office Approvals .....	4-6
<b>5</b>	<b>PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS PLAN.....</b>	<b>1</b>
5.1	ODOT Coordination .....	1
5.2	Consultant Team Communications .....	1
<b>6</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
6.1	ODOT Project Director.....	6-1
6.2	Consultant Team Project Manager.....	6-1
<b>7</b>	<b>SCHEDULE.....</b>	<b>7-1</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>WORKS CITED.....</b>	<b>8-1</b>



# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is currently undertaking the update to its Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is a multimodal transportation plan that sets the policy direction and planning framework for all modes of transportation in Oklahoma and sets a long-term vision for the development and preservation of the system.

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to outline methods for encouraging citizens, affected organizations and other interested parties to be involved in and comment on development of the ODOT LRTP. Methods for encouraging involvement include providing access to plans, programs and their supporting materials, and opportunities to comment as the plan and program develops.

## 1.1 Public Participation in Statewide Planning

Public participation is a critically important component in the transportation planning process. It ensures that the concerns of Oklahoma residents and stakeholders are identified and addressed throughout the process, which in turn affords the opportunity for transportation benefits to all Oklahomans.

For the Long Range Transportation Plan update, this specific Public Participation Plan (PPP) has been created to detail the public involvement process and communication methods to be utilized in the preparation of the document. This PPP identifies the different types, target audiences, and anticipated timing and outcomes of the public participation activities. The PPP includes three major components:

1. The goals and objectives;
2. The communications methods and strategies between the consultants, sub-consultants, ODOT staff, and the general public; and
3. A contact list and schedule of public participation for the project.

LRTP public involvement efforts and deliverables involving public participation, including all public meeting materials and summaries as well as website content, will be reported to the appropriate ODOT staff and posted on the project website [OKLongRangePlan.org](http://OKLongRangePlan.org) and documented in a public involvement log to be summarized as part of the LRTP. The LRTP plan website, draft plan document and meetings will incorporate the use of visualization techniques to describe the plan and its supporting studies. Potential tools may include maps, charts, diagrams, and other tools to be determined. The PPP will be supplemented as needed during the plan effort and will be used to manage the overall public outreach and stakeholder involvement process.



## 1.2 Federal Regulations Concerning Public Participation

This PPP contains a proactive public participation process that complies with Federal public participation requirements for statewide planning. This plan is guided by the following legislation and policies.

### 1.2.1 Federal Public Participation Requirements under SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21

Federal regulations in the final rulemaking issued on February 14, 2007 (effective March 16, 2007) following the passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users (Public Law 109-59; SAFETEA-LU) in 2005 require formal documentation of the public involvement process used for statewide planning. This PPP, in turn, was developed as mandated by the federal legislation to provide public participation procedures that are inclusive, timely, and complete. This PPP strives to:

- Provide opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points, with adequate public notice and access to underlying technical and policy information;
- Provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to citizens, affected public agencies, and stakeholders including representatives of public transportation users and users of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, representatives of the disabled, private transportation providers, providers of freight transportation services, freight shippers, representatives of public transportation employees, and other interested parties; and
- Provide participation opportunities to those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households.

MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (Public Law 112-141), was signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012. MAP-21 creates a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991. Current public participation rules as carried forward will be followed pending announcement of any new rules pursuant to MAP-21.

### 1.2.2 Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act provides that “no person shall on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” (United States Congress, 1964) The act requires that the entire institution receiving federal funds comply with Title VI and ODOT abides by the act by providing open and inclusive access to the transportation decision-making process for all persons.

In addition, Federally-recognized Tribes are considered to be interested parties in statewide transportation planning. As required, plan update materials will be sent by



ODOT staff to representatives of the Tribal governments in Oklahoma to provide opportunities for review and comment.

### **1.2.3 Executive Order on Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898, February 11, 1994)**

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The Executive Order on Environmental Justice states that “each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” (United States Executive Office, 1994) ODOT is committed to providing opportunities for participation in the transportation decision-making process and has an Environmental Justice Plan entitled *Every Voice Counts*.

### **1.2.4 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that “no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity.” (United States Congress, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as Amended., 2009) Therefore, sites for public participation activities and the information presented must be accessible to persons with disabilities. ODOT holds all public meetings at ADA-accessible locations and with advance notice the Department can make special provisions for hearing or vision impaired individuals. In addition, ODOT’s plan website is ADA-compliant and ODOT can provide written materials in alternative formats upon request.

### **1.2.5 Executive Order on Limited English Proficiency (Executive Order 13166, August 11, 2000)**

The Executive Order on Limited English Proficiency requires that recipients of federal financial funds ensure that programs and activities normally provided in English are accessible to persons with limited English proficiency. If requested or needed by the public, all meeting materials, documents and other communications may be translated by ODOT into other languages upon request and arrangements may be made for provision of interpretation services so that information is accessible to all people including non-English-speaking populations.



## 2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

For the public and agencies to effectively evaluate and comment on the LRTP policies, they should be adequately informed about the study and understand the details associated with the analysis. This PPP is designed to provide a roadmap for a process that maximizes public engagement and information at the same time that it creates opportunities for stakeholders and interested members of the public to provide input.

The objectives of the public participation plan for this project are as follows:

- Establish a cooperative, continuous and comprehensive framework for making transportation investment decisions throughout the State.
- Encourage early and continuous engagement of project stakeholders and the public.
- Maximize outreach opportunities and disseminate project information in a proactive and timely manner.
- Provide project stakeholders and the public with clear, concise information regarding the project.
- Build awareness among the general public and decision makers utilizing innovative methods and combinations of different public involvement techniques.
- Establish opportunities for early and continuing public engagement and provide adequate notice.
- Provide the public with timely information and reasonable access to technical and policy information utilized in the development of plans and programs.
- Provide the public a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed plan by utilizing methods, aside from traditional public meetings, such as direct mailings and web-based outreach strategies.
- Include a formal process that shows consideration to comments from public participants and responds to public input received during the public engagement process.

## 3 KEY AUDIENCES

Stakeholders for this study are defined as groups or individuals who are affected by, or have an interest in this project. Because of the diverse audiences that will be participating in this study process, the CDM Smith team and ODOT will reach out to the public in different ways, striving to identify, target, and strategize on how best to engage each group and individuals. The public involvement program will create a structure for gaining an understanding of different community interests and characteristics.

- **Affected Public Agencies**, including representatives of State transportation organizations, regional planning staff and officials, local officials, and related



State agencies, including environmental resources, cultural resources, human service, and economic development agencies;

- **Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs);**
- **Tribal Councils;**
- **Public Transportation Users and Providers/Employees**, including mass transit organizations and rail clubs;
- **Freight Shippers, Carriers, and Freight Forwarders;**
- **Public and Private Freight Transportation Owners/Operators** including modal association leaders and organizations representing trucking, rail freight, airlines, airports, and ports and transportation industry workforces;
- **Private Transportation Providers**, including intercity and charter bus operators;
- **Bicyclists and Pedestrians**, including bicycle clubs, walking/hiking clubs, trail advocacy groups, and pedestrian safety advocates;
- **Persons with Disabilities**, including those with visual, hearing, and mobility impairments and the mentally challenged;
- **Cultural, Historical, and Resource Advocacy Groups;**
- **Representatives of Environmental Justice Organizations;**
- **Land Use Practitioners and Advocacy Groups; and**
- **Other individuals and parties who may be interested in commenting**, for example, senior citizens.

## 4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION METHODS

As part of the LRTP update, ODOT will utilize several participation and communication methods to ensure that continuous public access to project information is provided throughout the duration of the planning process.

It is important to ensure that the public and key stakeholders have ample opportunities to provide informed input throughout the study process. For this to happen, a variety of public engagement activities will be used to reach each different audience in the most effective manner for that specific type of audience. Factors to be considered in determining the most appropriate public engagement tool include the size and type of audience (in this case, key stakeholders, individuals, and groups, and the general public), level and awareness and knowledge of transportation issues, geographic distributions, and preferred formats.



The most effective public involvement efforts use a combination of methods and technologies to convey and receive information; build awareness; provide resources; and develop relationships. The public outreach methods that will be used to the public informed throughout the study process, as well as at key milestones, include the following:

- Public Participation Plan
- Development of Advisory Committees
- Development of a Project Website
- Public Open Houses
- Response to Public Comments
- Communication Methods/Tools
- Documentation

#### **4.1.1 Communication Methods/Tools**

All communication must be approved by ODOT. The ODOT team will be responsible for leading all media relations with support of the consultant team. The following communication tools have been approved by ODOT:

- Advisory Committee Meetings
- Public Open Houses
- Video
- Website
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Press Releases

#### **4.2 Development of Advisory Committees**

ODOT has organized the following three advisory committees for the development of the LRTP:

- Freight Advisory Committee
- Tribal Advisory Committee
- Personal Travel Advisory Committee

ODOT will assemble each advisory committee and provide contact information to the consultant project team. The CDM Smith team will provide communication to ODOT regarding advisory committee meetings, as well as project updates as directed.

Each advisory committee is solely responsible for providing information and requested feedback to the project team as it relates to this study. ODOT is the final owner and director of project directives.

ODOT will utilize the following primary public participation methods. The first type of public outreach is specific stakeholder meetings, which will be held in combination with existing meetings or conferences.



## 4.3 Development of Project Website

### 4.3.1 Purpose and Objectives

ODOT supported by the consultant project team will develop and maintain a project website as a link from ODOT's main website ([www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us)). The website content will consist of project goals and objectives, purpose and need, project status reports, project schedule information, maps and graphics, project visualizations, information regarding future public open houses or other meetings, information regarding advisory committee meetings, and public open house summaries and materials. The website is to be developed and maintained by the consultant team with the understanding that it be portable and easily transferable in the future.

The website is to be designed with space for video, calendar, project updates, fill-in contact form for individuals to be added to distribution list, and future survey to collect public comments for the study.

### 4.3.2 Content and Maintenance

The website will accommodate four main communications areas:

- Data collections of individuals interested in being added to the ODOT Stakeholder lists.
- Announcement of public open house events including: dates, times and locations.
- Capture public consensus from those that could not attend a public meeting by providing an online survey to collect requested data.
- The website provides a vehicle to post information on past public events and will serve as a resource to the public, ODOT staff, and consultant team on what took place at public open houses through U-Stream (YouTube) posts.

The navigational structure of the new website will encompass the following elements:

- Home: Dashboard directing viewers dependent upon the information they are seeking.
- About: Background information, Purpose and Need Statements on the ODOT LRTP.
- Stay Informed: Page to collect contact data from individuals interested in being added to the ODOT Stakeholder List.
- Resources: This is the hub for data presented at public open houses including documents, presentations, press releases, related web links, and photo gallery
- Calendar: Interactive calendar of past and upcoming events.

Two-way communications will be essential to the website. An online survey tool built into the site will enable the planning team to gauge public opinion on an ongoing basis. The survey tool will allow for immediate feedback and perspective on multiple levels of information pertaining to the LRTP



### 4.3.3 Promotion

The project specific website will be promoted in coordination with the ODOT and through traditional public relations news media channels, as well as online through social media releases that push the news out to appropriate Internet and social media outlets.

Other promotional efforts will include eBlasts to key constituents and aligning with other transportation-related events being conducted throughout the state. Traditional print materials (handed out at public meetings) will be posted on the site as well.

## 4.4 Public Open Houses

Public open houses will be conducted during the course of the development of the LRTP. These meetings will serve to provide information to the public about the study and to gather public comments.

*Timing and Staffing:* Each open house will be held in the early evening at locations to be determined by ODOT and supported by the consultant project team.

*Materials:* The consultant team supported by ODOT will prepare display boards for each public open house, as well as meeting signs, and any other necessary material. ODOT will provide sign-in sheets and support in creating comment cards that fit the needs of the study.

*Open House Publicity:* The consultant team will support ODOT in placing the legal notice, developing supporting press releases and sending out email notifications to interested stakeholders in regards to public open houses. Additionally, the project team will work with ODOT to provide information for support publicity outlets such as Twitter at least three weeks prior to public meetings.

*Documentation:* Photographs will be taken during each open house and all questions/comments will be documented and summarized by the consultant project team in an open house summary report to be submitted two weeks after the meeting. Meeting materials will be uploaded to the project website within a week after the meeting upon approval by ODOT.

### 4.4.1 Forums/Venues

ODOT will secure all meeting venues with support provided by the consultant team.

### 4.4.2 Promotion

Approved meeting notices and communications will be posted to the LRTP project website in accordance with the ODOT's website publishing protocols and the targeted stakeholder committee members will be notified by email of specific meetings.

## 4.5 Response to Public Comment

Once the draft LRTP has been prepared, ODOT will conduct a 21-day public comment period in which ODOT will publicize the availability of the draft plan for



review and comment. The draft plan will be posted on the project website in a downloadable format. A printed copy will be available upon request.

ODOT, supported by the consulting project team, will provide a response all public comments. Should comments be made via the project website, a generic email will be generated thanking them for their feedback. Additional information as needed will be developed and provided by ODOT.

## **4.6 Other Forms of Public Communications**

### **4.6.1 Contact/Emailing List**

A contact/emailing list of stakeholders will be developed by ODOT and maintained by the consultant team managing the website with direct reporting of changes made to ODOT. These contact lists will be used to distribute electronic material. In keeping with a “green policy,” printed materials will be kept to a minimum. The emailing list will be based on the ODOT-supplied distribution database and will be supplemented with existing transportation agency emailing lists, as well as those from other organizations and groups participating in the process. The consultant team will assist ODOT with updating this list over the course of the project as people request to join the list, participate in meetings or provide comments to the project team.

Any individual interested in participating in the LRTP planning process may also request to be added to the LRTP emailing list by providing contact information online, at any meeting on the LRTP, or to the ODOT or consultant team project managers at the addresses or telephone numbers listed below in Section 5 of this PPP.

### **4.6.2 Press Releases and Public Notices**

The LRTP update process and public involvement opportunities will also be promoted when appropriate through traditional public relations news media channels including public notices and press releases. The project team will coordinate with ODOT who will arrange all notices and press releases.

### **4.6.3 Other Print Material**

Project information may also be promoted through other print material such as flyers or ODOT-directed brochures.

### **4.6.4 Public Affairs Office Approvals**

The consultant team will develop draft public notification materials for the ODOT Public Affairs Office review, approval, and final publication.



## **5 PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

### **5.1 ODOT Coordination**

The consultant team will maintain close coordination with ODOT to ensure that all public notification materials meet the Department's specifications.

### **5.2 Consultant Team Communications**

The Project Management Communications Plan outlines the recommended communications process between the consultants, sub-consultants, and ODOT staff. Meeting frequency is subject to change and refinement as the project progresses and in response to specific recommendations and outcomes from the input meetings throughout the process.



## 6 CONTACT INFORMATION

### 6.1 ODOT Project Director

Project-specific communications should be directed to the ODOT Project Director listed below.

Linda Koenig  
Planning & Policy Analyst  
ODOT Planning & Research Division  
200 NE 21st Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
Phone: (405)522-0171  
Fax: (405) 521-6917  
Email: [lkoenig@odot.org](mailto:lkoenig@odot.org)

### 6.2 Consultant Team Project Manager

General project communications should be directed to the consultant team project manager listed below.

**Jeff Carroll, CDM Smith Project Manager**

**(March – December 2014)**

**Joined High Street Consulting Group in December 2014**

**1031 Gervals Street, Suite 1600**

**Columbia, SC 29202**

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**Christopher Nazar, AICP, CDM Smith Project Manager**

**(December 2014 – August 2015)**

**Associate Planner and Technical Delivery Manager – Transportation West**

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**Denver, CO 80202**

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## 7 SCHEDULE

The public involvement process will begin in June 2014 and will continue throughout the projects until the project's conclusion in August 2015. A full project schedule is provided in the Project Management Communications Plan. Details about future



meetings will be posted on the project website when dates and locations are finalized.

**Table 1 - Schedule of Public Involvement Activities**

Activity	Draft Dates	Due Dates/Meeting Dates	Team Member Responsible
Project Website	May 27, 2014	June 1, 2014	Consultant team with approval by ODOT
Communications due for Public Open House scheduled in Muskogee, OK (June 10, 2014)	May 19, 2014	May 27, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Communications for Public Open House in Moore, OK (June 11, 2014)	May 19, 2014	May 27, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Communication for Public Open House in Clinton, OK (June 12, 2014)	May 19, 2014	May 27, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Public Open House in Muskogee, OK		June 10, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Public Open House in Moore, OK		June 11, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Public Open House in Clinton, OK		June 12, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Communications due for Advisory Committee Meetings (June 10 & 11, 2014)	May 19, 2014	<i>Invitation:</i> May 27, 2014 June 4, 2014 - Tribal  <i>Reminder:</i> June 3, 2014 June 19, 2014 - Tribal	Consultant team upon approval by ODOT
Personal Travel Advisory Committee Meeting		June 10, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Freight Advisory Committee Meeting		June 11, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Tribal Advisory Committee Meeting		July 17, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Public Open House in Muskogee, OK		November 17, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Public Open House in Clinton, OK		November 18, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Public Open House in Moore, OK		November 19, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team



Personal Travel Advisory Committee Meeting		November 18, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Freight Advisory Committee Meeting		November 19, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Tribal Advisory Committee Meeting		November 19, 2014	ODOT with support by consultant team
Advisory Committee Review of Draft Plan Report		July 6 –July 16, 2015	ODOT with support by consultant team
Public Comment Period for Draft Plan Report		July 15-August 05, 2015	ODOT with support by consultant team



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