


<b>Oregon Department of Transportation</b>  <b>POLICY</b> (Date: 10/22/2020)	NUMBER OTC-11	SUPERSEDES 2008 Public Involvement Policy
	EFFECTIVE DATE Approved 10/22/2020	PAGE NUMBER 01 OF 05
	VALIDATION DATE 10/22/2020	
	REFERENCE 2020 Public Involvement Policy and Procedures	
SUBJECT <b>PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY</b>		

## **PURPOSE**

The Oregon Transportation Commission establishes the following policy and core implementation actions to assist in meeting state and federal public participation requirements for statewide planning processes and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) development.

## **POLICY**

The Oregon Transportation Commission and the Oregon Department of Transportation will meaningfully involve the public in important decisions by providing for early, open, continuous, equitable and effective public participation to key planning and project decision-making processes.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Improve public involvement during the development and update of statewide transportation plans and the STIP.

Improve consistency of ODOT public involvement processes.

Advise ODOT staff regarding public involvement processes, including coordination within the agency and with partners.

Actively involve members of the public and others in the development and update of statewide transportation plans and the STIP.

Meet or exceed all applicable public participation requirements for statewide planning and development or updates of the STIP.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Oregon Transportation Commission and the Oregon Department of Transportation are dedicated to the goal of developing a safe and reliable multimodal transportation system that connects people and helps Oregon's communities and economy thrive. Achieving this goal requires a unified transportation system plan that considers all modes of Oregon's transportation system as integral parts of a single system.

The Oregon Transportation, together with its mode and topic plans, and more refined transportation facility plans, as defined in Oregon administrative rules, together constitute the long-range transportation system plan for the state in compliance with federal and state regulations and rules. The OTP provides the long-range multimodal vision for transportation in the state. In addition, the plans establish key policy goals, objectives and strategies to inform future transportation planning, investment choices and priorities. The STIP is Oregon's four-year transportation capital improvement program. It shows the transportation projects and activities to be funded by ODOT to implement the policies and strategies of the state's transportation system plan.

Transportation facility plans such as corridor plans, refinement plans and interchange area management plans are developed to identify solutions for specific transportation problems. Many of the project that are later funded in the STIP result from these facility planning efforts. The adoption process for transportation facility plans will follow the core implementation actions provided in the policy, in addition to specific requirements provided in the State Agency Coordination Program (OAR 731-15-065).

The public involvement policy is adopted because the OTC and ODOT recognize public involvement is crucial to ensuring statewide transportation plans and projects selected in the STIP effectively and efficiently provide for Oregonian's transportation needs. This policy and its implementation actions are intended to provide the public the opportunity to provide meaningful input in the development of plans and possible projects. It will also ensure that ODOT is meeting state and federal requirements for public involvement.

The overarching policy updates the public involvement policies and procedures adopted by the OTC in 2008. The policy re-commits the OTC and ODOT to provide meaningful involvement from the public while developing and updating statewide transportation plans and the STIP. The policy lists basic steps necessary to meet public involvement requirements. ODOT has and uses extensive public involvement practices. The policy and implementation actions set forth in this document are core practices to maintain compliance with regulations regarding public involvement. Many divisions, sections and units within ODOT such as Equity and Civil Rights, Delivery and Operations, and Government and External Relations along with Revenue, Finance and Compliance divisions conduct public involvement and/or public outreach using processes unique to their needs. Those divisions will continue to refine their specific procedures building on these core requirements.

## **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

The purpose of these actions are to implement the policy, meet federal and state regulations

regarding public involvement, and to incorporate guidance received from the OTC and other ODOT policies and procedures regarding public involvement. These actions apply broadly to all ODOT planning and STIP development activities throughout the state, though some articulate actions regarding specific stakeholders such as area commissions on transportation to meet individual regulations or policies.

The agency will:

1. Abide by all applicable state and federal laws and rules in implementing public involvement processes for the development and update of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the development of the STIP.
2. Develop the long-ranges statewide transportation plan and the STIP in consultation and cooperation with affected state and federal land use agencies such as natural resources agencies and land management agencies, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation; and owners of the transportation system such as tribal governments, and others including advisory committees formed under state law or otherwise appointed by the governor, the OTC or ODOT to assist with specific transportation issues. In addition, develop the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP in consultation and cooperation with the providers of transportation systems and services such as MPOs, metropolitan and non-metropolitan area local governments, special districts such as transit and port districts, and others. Ensure statewide perspective from both urban and rural areas.
3. Follow the requirements of Oregon public meeting law (ORS 192.610 to 192.690) for all advisory committees appointed by or reporting to the OTC, such as holding meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.
4. Use as appropriate a broad based statewide list of interested parties including but not limited to: individuals and organizations that are interested in or affected by transportation decisions such as interested members of the public; private providers of transportation; users of public transportation; users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities; representatives of older adults; representatives of people with disabilities; providers of freight transportation services; business interests; other interested parties; and organizations who are interested in or affected by transportation decisions including, but not limited to representatives of front line communities, businesses owned by Black, indigenous, people of color citizens, women and others who have been historically and/or currently marginalized.
5. Provide an ODOT representative to advise the area commissions on transportation during the development and update of the STIP.
6. Provide early and continuous public involvement opportunities that seek out and consider the needs of those populations traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low income and minority population, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services. ODOT will use inclusive public involvement strategies to identify and connect with under-represented populations and solicit their participation.
7. Provide interested parties with timely information about transportation issues and decision making processes and adequate notice of key decision points leading to the development and update of statewide transportation plans and the STIP.
8. Work with metropolitan planning organizations to coordinate involvement during the

- development of their local transportation system plans and the STIP or update of their metropolitan transportation plan and its transportation improvement program.
9. When assisting local governments in the development of their local transportation system plans provide information and guidance on public involvement process as outlined in the Transportation System Plan Guidelines.
  10. Local coordination procedures document a separate and discrete process for working with local officials representing units of general purpose and local officials with responsibility for transportation that provides for their participation in the development of the statewide transportation plans and the STIP. Ensure that this process builds upon the established role of the area commissions on transportation in meeting this need. Solicit and review comments from such officials and other interested parties regarding the effectiveness of these consultation procedures at least every five years, allowing at least a 60-day public review and comment period.
  11. Employ visualization techniques such as maps, photographs, display boards, scenario building programs, online open houses, utilization of virtual tools and opportunities for public engagement and input to the maximum extent possible to describe the proposed statewide transportation plans and the STIP.
  12. Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information use in the development of and update of statewide transportation plans and the STIP and make such information available in an electronically accessible format and means such as on the internet, and as required by the Oregon public records law (ORS 192.420 to 192.505). Use these information distribution mechanisms to the maximum extent practicable for public involvement processes.
  13. Publish, distribute and make available including in an electronically accessible format and means such as the internet, the adopted Oregon Transportation Plans and the statewide mode/topic and transportation facility plans, and the adopted STIP.
  14. Provide at least a 45-day public review and written comment period for proposed statewide transportation plans, for the proposed STIP, and at least a 45-day public review and written comment period for a major update of either document prior to adoption of plans or program by the OTC. In addition, transportation facility plans will follow specific requirements provided in the State Agency Coordination Program.
  15. Provide statewide opportunities for public review and comment on proposed statewide transportation plans and the proposed STIP by providing information statewide, within each region and locally through standing groups of new public events.
  16. Notify the Area Commissions on Transportation regarding significant amendments to the approved STIP. Significant changes to the STIP will follow the procedures outlined in this policy and any other requirements in rule or statute.
  17. Involve the public, frontline communities, BIPOC and interested parties to an appropriate and meaningful extent when making major changes to an existing long-range plan. Technical changes may not require input, but an extended public input process may be executed in some instances. Major amendments to plans must follow the procedures in this policy. Changes to a specific goal or policy in a plan should be completed only after meaningful engagement and input with the directly affected groups.
  18. Consider and respond to public input on proposed long-range statewide transportation plans, the proposed STIP and transportation facility plans prior to adoption of the plan

or program by the OTC.

19. Provide input received during public involvement processes in the development or update of statewide transportation plans and the STIP to planning and project teams.
20. Submit the proposed public involvement policy and implementation actions to at least a 45-day public review before their adoption by the OTC and submit any major revision of the adopted final document to at least a 45-day public review and comment period.
21. Publish and distribute this adopted public involvement policy and its implementation actions and provide them in an electronically accessible format and means such as the internet.
22. Review the effectiveness of this public involvement policy and implementation actions as needed to ensure that they provide full, meaningful and open access to all interested parties and revise the process as appropriate.