

<p><b>Oregon Transportation Commission</b></p>  <p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<p>NUMBER</p> <p><b>TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION-11</b></p>	<p>SUPERSEDES</p> <p><b>2020 Public Involvement Policy 10/22/2020</b></p>
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	<p>REFERENCE</p> <p><b>May 7, 2026 OTC Meeting Summary</b></p>	
<p>SUBJECT</p> <p><b>PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY</b></p>		

**PURPOSE**

The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) establishes the following policy and core implementation expectations to guide public involvement efforts by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff. These expectations ensure compliance with state and federal public involvement requirements and agency objectives for statewide planning processes, the Capital Investment Plan (CIP), and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) development.

**POLICY:**

The OTC and ODOT are committed to implementing decision making structures that build public trust by making decisions in an open and transparent manner considering public feedback.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Improve consistency of OTC and ODOT public involvement processes.
2. Guide ODOT staff regarding public involvement processes, including coordination within the agency, and with partners.
3. Ensure that all applicable state and federal public participation requirements for statewide planning, CIP and STIP development are met or exceeded.
4. Solidify the OTC and ODOT’s commitment to meaningfully engage the public during the creation and annual update of the CIP.
5. Engage diverse voices across the state to create resilient and sustainable plans that consider the needs of all people living in Oregon.
6. Ensure the Oregon Transportation Plan’s outreach engagement policies and commitments are applied.

## **BACKGROUND**

The OTC and ODOT are committed to achieving the vision of the Oregon Transportation Plan: “Oregon’s transportation system supports all Oregonians by connecting people and goods to places in the most climate-friendly, equitable, and safe way.” Achieving this goal requires a unified transportation plan that considers all modes of Oregon’s transportation system as integral parts of a single system.

The Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) is a key component of the long-range transportation system plan for the state. It establishes a vision and policy foundation to guide transportation system development and investment. The OTP, along with its associated statewide mode and topic plans, guide decisions by ODOT and partner transportation agencies. This guidance is carried forward into local and regional transportation plans.

The Capital Investment Plan, or CIP, is ODOT’s mid-range planning document for identifying planned investments over 10 years. Project concepts in the CIP will be refined as they move through the planning and scoping phases. Projects will have the opportunity for appropriate public involvement both in the CIP and when they are programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. Involvement at both stages will be reflective of the purpose of the document.

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, or STIP, is the ODOT’s federally required programming document for the statewide intermodal program of transportation projects. The document consists of projects funded with federal and state funding.

The OTC has final authority over these efforts, including adoption of statewide plans, as well as approval of the CIP and STIP. The Commission will deliberate and make decisions on these and other topics in public meetings, with materials posted prior to the meeting and opportunity for public comments to be submitted verbally or in writing at the meeting.

## **CONTEXT**

ODOT recognizes public involvement is not a one size fits all approach. Each effort should engage meaningfully early in the process with a diverse use of engagement methods and tools. Public involvement should support meeting people where they are, building understanding for informed feedback, while also balancing efficient and effective use of OTC and ODOT resources.

The OTC Public Involvement Policy is applicable to all appropriate state and federal policies.

## **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

The following guidelines apply to all ODOT statewide plans, the STIP, and when specifically noted the CIP. These guidelines guide coordination with partner organizations including but not limited to Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), local government agencies, and the general public.

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

### *Processes*

1. Abide by all applicable state laws<sup>1</sup> referenced below, and federal laws<sup>2</sup> and rules in implementing public involvement processes for the development and update of statewide transportation plans and the development of the STIP.
2. Meet the State of Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 1: Citizen Involvement – The purpose of Goal 1 (660-015-0000(1)) is “To develop a citizen involvement program that ensures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process.”
3. Meet the State of Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 12: Transportation Planning (660-012-000(1)(g) which states "(g) Engage underserved populations in decision-making and prioritize investments serving those communities."
4. Ensure that all public meetings follow the Oregon Public Meetings Law (ORS 192.610 to 192.705), including holding meetings at locations and times that are convenient, accessible and transparent to the public.
5. Hold public hearings consistent with requirements under Oregon Revised Statute 192.
6. Comply with ORS.183.750 in providing public communication in language that is plain and clear as possible.
7. Apply the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure public involvement uses accessibility standards for communications and outreach.
8. Comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (49 CFR 21 and 23 CFR 200) to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, and national origin be excluded from participation.
9. Ensure meaningful language access for persons for whom English is their second language or otherwise cannot communicate in English.
10. Ensure protection of personal information when collecting any identity-related data.
11. Provide a minimum 45-day formal public review and written comment period for major changes for proposed statewide transportation plans and draft CIP.

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<sup>1</sup> Including Oregon Statute and Policy: ORS 182.535 – Environmental Justice Council; HB 4077 (2022); and SB 420 (2008).

<sup>2</sup> 23 CFR Part 450.210 Interested parties, public involvement, and consultation.

12. Provide a minimum 45-day formal public review and written comment period for development of the draft STIP.
13. Provide a 15-day public review of proposed amendments of the adopted STIP.
14. Evaluate and incorporate public input into long-range statewide transportation plans, STIP, and CIP before their adoption by the OTC.

### *Engagement Methods*

15. Work to create fair and meaningful public involvement by<sup>3</sup>:
  - Leveraging data to inform and understand the community demographics.
  - Building durable community relationships with community members outside of the project lifecycle to understand their transportation needs.
  - Involving a broad representation of communities by using community-preferred engagement techniques.
  - Developing specific strategies that address specific barriers for underserved communities.
  - Documenting how community input impacted the final projects, program, or plans, and communicating with the affected communities how their input was used.
16. For each decision-making process evaluate the appropriate level of public involvement (e.g., inform, consult, involve, collaborate, or empower<sup>4</sup>.) Document which level of public involvement was used and why for a 45-day formal public review.
17. Provide early, continual, and inclusive public involvement opportunities (CFR 450.210).
18. Incorporate appropriate partners including but not limited to individuals and organizations that are interested in or affected by transportation decisions such as: transportation disadvantaged groups<sup>5</sup>; local agencies; interested members of the public; private providers of transportation; users of public transportation; users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities; seniors; 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

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<sup>3</sup> U.S Department of Transportation. [Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making](#). October 2022.

<sup>4</sup> International Association of Public Participation IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> The Oregon Transportation Plan defines Transportation Disadvantaged: Includes communities of color, people experiencing low income, older adults, youth, and people with disabilities, who are at a significant disadvantage without access to convenient, safe, well-integrated transportation alternatives. All of these groups are often without easy access to cars and live in locations without convenient, safe transportation alternatives.

decisions.<sup>6</sup>

19. Actively seek out opportunities for public review and comment at the regional and local level through a variety of engagement practices, including in-person and virtual public meetings, public notices, online open houses, virtual tools, and other methods of outreach.
20. Ensure outreach engages all applicable parts of the state and recognize the difference in needs of each region.
21. Create a plan to share gathered feedback and comments with planning and project teams during the project development or update of state transportation plans, the CIP, and the STIP.
22. Inform affected state and federal land use agencies such as; natural resources agencies and land management agencies; local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation; and other partners including advisory committees formed under Oregon Revised Statutes or otherwise appointed by the Governor, the OTC or ODOT to assist with specific transportation issues during the development of statewide transportation plans, CIP, and the STIP.
23. Develop statewide transportation plans, the CIP, and the STIP in consultation and cooperation with the providers of transportation systems and services such as ACTs, MPOs, metropolitan and non-metropolitan area local governments, and others.
24. For any significant changes that require a 45-day formal public review, notify impacted ACTs.
25. Coordinate with the ODOT representatives of the ACT during the development and update of statewide transportation plans, the STIP, and CIP to ensure ACTs receive information at key milestones and public review.
26. Changes to a significant goal or policy in a plan should be completed only after meaningful engagement and input with the directly affected partners and advisory groups.
27. Commit to transparency by reviewing 45-day formal public review comments, documenting changes made, and sharing review of comments with the OTC for statewide plans, CIP and STIP.

### *Tools*

28. Utilize tools from the Office of Engagement and Civil Rights including the Equitable Engagement Compensation Program (EECP), Community Impact

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<sup>6</sup> Tribal Governments follow their own engagement process. Please refer to ODOT's Tribal Consultation process. Tribal Governments are not a part of the public involvement process.

Analysis, Equitable Engagement Guide, Index Map, Right to Access Plan, and community-based organizations to effectively identify and engage with diverse communities.

29. Utilize communication tools such as but not limited to: websites; email lists; newsletters; individual letters; press releases; and social media; advisory committees; online open houses; webinars; partner meetings and presentations; listening meetings; public hearings and meetings; hybrid and virtual meetings; and focus groups.

### **SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR THE CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN**

1. Seek input from ACTs, the public, MPOs, and local governments on prioritizing the OTP goals which will be used by the OTC to determine investment priorities in the CIP every three to five years.
2. Annually seek input from the ACTs on potential investments to be included in the CIP.
3. Annually share finalized CIP list with ACTs, MPOs, local governments, and the public.

### **ASSESSMENT OF OUR PRACTICES**

1. Review the effectiveness of this public involvement policy at key milestones 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.
2. Partner with the Office of Engagement and Civil Rights to identify a review of public involvement efforts and outcomes.
3. Solicit and review comments from local officials and other interested parties regarding the effectiveness of these consultation procedures through the federally-required Local Consultation Survey at least every five years, allowing at least a 60-day public review and comment period.
4. Provide a minimum 45-day formal public review and comment period for this proposed public involvement policy and implementation actions before adoption by the OTC.