

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT METHODS AND PROCESSES FOR NON-METROPOLITAN AREA LOCAL OFFICIALS**

ODOT has developed the following public involvement methods and processes to ensure consultation with local officials in non-metropolitan areas for transportation planning programs administered by ODOT as required by federal regulation 23 CFR 450.210(b). This process is separate and discrete from the public participation process used for transportation policy and project development in metropolitan areas of greater than 50,000 population. In metropolitan areas, transportation plan development is cooperatively administered by the Metropolitan Planning Organizations who conduct their own public involvement.

The following methods and processes apply to the *Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*. The STIP is a financially constrained federal program which identifies priority and regionally significant transportation projects in which full funding is reasonably anticipated to be available during a four (4) year period. Included is a schedule of projects for the Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Indian Reservation Roads Program, County Program and other transportation programs as necessary. The STIP details specific projects, funding, and anticipated construction let dates by year, county and ODOT Division. It is developed biennially and revised through a series of amendments.

The following methods and processes also apply to the *Statewide Intermodal Transportation Plan* (herein referred to as “the Plan”). The Plan contains policies that guide transportation planning for a minimum of 20 years into the future. It is intermodal, that is, it considers policies for highways, rail, air, waterways, rural transit, and pedestrian/bicycle forms of transportation. Unlike the STIP, the Plan does not usually contain specific transportation projects; however, it may identify corridors for transportation improvements. The Plan is updated every five (5) years.

Public Involvement Methods. ODOT will use the following methods to consult, notify, solicit input, receive comments, and give notice of availability to the officials in non-metropolitan areas for the above described planning documents. Exact methods depend on the situation and will embrace a combination, as appropriate, of the following methods:

- Conduct public meetings;
- Making decision-makers available, as possible and reasonable, for meetings with individuals and groups;
- Use the ODOT web site ([www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us)) for information notices, documents, and public input;
- Provide telephone contacts for input and comment;
- Publish “Notices of Availability” and Press Releases;
- Form and use advisory groups as appropriate;
- Provide traditional and electronic informational mailings;
- Provide informational pamphlets;
- Advertise as appropriate;

- Publish periodic newsletters; and
- Make available documents on compact discs (CDs), on the ODOT website, and in printed form.

Process for Consultation with Local Officials in Non-Metropolitan Areas. ODOT will use the following process for consultation with local officials in non-metropolitan areas:

- ODOT will solicit the following organizations to include informational articles, solicit comments, give notice of availability, notice of public meetings, and other information as appropriate through their organization:

Oklahoma Municipal League  
 Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma  
 Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
 Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils  
 Other organizations as appropriate and available

- Local officials will be notified of public meetings or any other public outreach associated with the transportation planning process and document preparation through the appropriate “Methods” discussed above; and
- ODOT will provide for multiple means of input into the planning process and documents through the appropriate “Methods” discussed above.

Process for Public Involvement on the *Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*. ODOT will include the above process in consulting with local officials on the STIP. In addition, ODOT will undertake the following:

- The STIP public involvement process will be made available to the following through the appropriate “Methods” discussed above:
  - General public
  - Elected Federal Representatives
  - Elected State Representatives
  - Elected County Officials
  - Elected Municipal Officials
  - State and Federal agencies
  - Tribal Governments and Tribal Transportation Officials
  - Substate planning districts
  - Metropolitan Planning Organizations
  - Public Libraries
  - Chambers of Commerce
  - Minority and economically disadvantaged groups
  - Rural Transit Providers and Oklahoma Transit Association
  - All others interested in the statewide planning process

- Statewide public outreach will be conducted every five years in conjunction with the update of the Plan. The STIP will also be presented in order to solicit public input on the current and future program;
- Participation in informal meetings between ODOT Field Division personnel, Local officials and Tribal Governments to discuss specific issues and project concepts;
- ODOT will advertise the availability of the STIP;
- ODOT will provide for multiple means for input into the planning process and STIP through the appropriate “Methods” discussed above; and
- ODOT will make the preliminary and final STIP available on its website. Preliminary and final copies of the STIP will also be available through compact disc (CD) and/or printed forms.

Process for Public Involvement on the *Statewide Intermodal Transportation Plan* . ODOT will include the above process in consulting with local officials on the *Statewide Intermodal Transportation Plan*. In addition, ODOT will undertake the following:

- The Plan’s public involvement process will be made available to the following through the appropriate “Methods” discussed above:
  - General public
  - Elected Federal Representatives
  - Elected State Representatives
  - Elected County Officials
  - Elected Municipal Officials
  - State and Federal agencies
  - Tribal Governments and Tribal Transportation Officials
  - Substate planning districts
  - Public Libraries
  - Chambers of Commerce
  - Lawton Metropolitan Planning Organization
  - Minority/economically disadvantaged groups
  - Rural Transit Providers and Oklahoma Transit Association
  - All others interested in the statewide planning process
- In an effort to present and gather input on revisions to the Plan, statewide public outreach will be conducted every five years. The outreach will include presentation of the existing Plan, information on the Plan update, methods for contacting the Plan update managers and tools for review, comment and input into the Plan;
- ODOT will advertise the availability of the Plan;
- ODOT will provide for multiple means of input into the planning process and the Plan through the appropriate “Methods” discussed above; and
- ODOT will solicit comments from non-metropolitan officials on effectiveness of the consultation process within two (2) years of implementation of the Plan and every five (5) years thereafter.