

## Chapter 2 Public Involvement Activities and Results

### Approach

The ODOT 2035 Long Range Plan Public Involvement Plan included a broad-based public outreach to diverse audiences and stakeholders across the State, not only to meet federal participation requirements but also to ensure that the transportation plan reflects the needs and concerns of ODOT’s constituencies and that there is support for its implementation. The Public Involvement Plan was prepared at the outset of the 2035 Long Range Plan process and was consistent with ODOT’s Public Participation Plan last updated in 2007.

Using the Public Involvement Plan, ODOT staff members reached out to stakeholders using traditional means, such as hosting a total of 21 public meetings and convening advisory committees. ODOT also offered the public new ways to communicate with the Department—for example, gathering comments online, developing a survey, and utilizing an extensive e-mail and mail contact list of almost 2,000 people. The results of the effort provided ODOT with a representative sample of the public’s attitudes toward transportation and their thoughts about policies.

This chapter explains the public involvement concepts that were developed at the beginning of the 2035 Long Range Plan process. It follows with a report on how those concepts were implemented during the Plan process and a description of the results.

### Overview of Public Involvement

The Public Involvement Plan centered on targeted meetings with the Advisory Committees and supported by strategic rounds of public meetings throughout Oklahoma. The

statewide community meetings facilitated broad participation and encouraged the high level of involvement. The meetings occurred in eight different geographic sectors of the State, coinciding with ODOT’s Field Division offices.

In developing the 2035 Long Range Plan, these meetings were supported by technical fact finding and educational updates on Oklahoma’s transportation, shared with the Advisory Groups and the public at-large via a dedicated website, newsletters, multi-media announcements, and more. **Figure 2-1** shows schedule for public involvement activities.

The Public Involvement Plan was developed to comply with the federal requirements of Title VI and the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. ODOT and the technical team identified strategies to seek fair treatment and meaningful public involvement of all population segments. The Plan was devised to ensure accessibility to information and meeting participation for all individuals.

### Results

ODOT conducted a thorough public outreach as part of the 2035 Long Range Plan. The outreach activities met federal requirements in that several techniques were utilized to receive, consolidate, and consider public comments through various avenues. These included meetings, surveys, mailings, website access, and advisory committees.



2010 – 2035 SITP Public Involvement Plan Project Activities Schedule																						
Task	2008		2009												2010							
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
<b>2.0 Public Participation</b>																						
Draft PIP for review, approval	○	●																				
Coordinate Telephone and PO Box	DOT/PB	DOT/PB																				
Establish Project Website, logo, functionality, linkages, continual update																						
Set up and Maintain Contact Database																						
Develop Website content, Updates																						
Powerpoint Presentation, Updates																						
Kick Off Media Event																						
Advisory Group Interviews & meetings			INT. →																			
Project newsletters & public surveys				◆	§						◆									◆	§	
Develop Handouts/Fact Sheets/Meeting Materials																						
News Releases/ Notices of Meetings																						
Underserved Outreach																						
Community Meetings																						
Documentation of Public Comments																						
<b>9.0 Draft 2010-2035 Intermodal Plan</b>																						
<b>10.0 Final 2010-2035 Intermodal Plan</b>																						
	◆	Draft Report		▶	OOOT Workshop		○	Draft PMP/PPP		◆	Newsletter		DOT/PB	ODOT/PB								
	■	Final Report		■	Advisory Com/Public Mtgs		●	Final PMP/PPP		§	Web Survey											

Figure 2-1. Public Involvement Schedule

## Stakeholder Coordination

### *Initial Objective*

The public involvement activities were designed to include early identification of participants to serve on four Advisory Committees. The Advisory Committees were created to provide a comprehensive review of tribal, freight, personal/passenger, and technical transportation issues to be considered in the 2035 Long Range Plan.

Several meetings of the Advisory Committees were planned, and the process was structured to maximize dialogue and encourage collaboration among participants. The Advisory Committee meetings were open to the public, providing interested individuals with another opportunity to obtain information and progress reports on the study. A list of Advisory Committees and their participants is included in Table 2-1 through Table 2-4:

- ▶ **Table 2-1. Tribal Travel Advisory Committee**
- ▶ **Table 2-2. Personal Travel Advisory Committee**
- ▶ **Table 2-3. Freight Advisory Committee**
- ▶ **Table 2-4. Technical Advisory Committee**

### *Results*

A structured interview was conducted with individual committee members prior to a series of meetings with the Advisory Committees, regarding what they saw as the challenges and opportunities for transportation between 2010 and 2035. Seventy-eight Advisory Committee members submitted written responses to interview questions. The initial formation of the Advisory Committees and subsequent meetings generated the following themes:

### *Overall predominant themes/comments included:*

- ▶ Emphasis on roadways, bridges, and highways
  - Of the 30 respondents, 25 ranked “Roadways” as the most important related to mobility and 16 ranked “Public Transit” second (specific question asked of the Personal and Tribal Travel Committees).
  - Of the 48 respondents, 43 ranked “Highways” as the most important factor for economic development while 26 ranked “Freight Railroads” second (specific question asked of the Freight and Technical Committees).
  - Of the 51 respondents, 17 ranked “Increased maintenance on existing roadways” as the most important factor in enhancing personal and passenger mobility while 9 ranked “Improved/additional bus services” first (specific question asked of the Personal, Technical, and Tribal Committees).
  - Of the 48 respondents, 20 ranked “Increased maintenance of existing roadways” as the first priority to enhance goods movement, followed by 10 who ranked “Widen existing highways” second (specific question asked of the Freight and Technical Committees).
  - The majority of respondents ranked “Increased maintenance of roads and bridges” as the most important funding priority related to movement of people and goods.
  - Of the 15 respondents, 11 indicated “No” when asked if they are satisfied with the ability of the system to support their supply chain logistics system (specific question asked of the Freight Committee).



**Table 2-1. Tribal Travel Advisory Committee**

<b>Advisory Committee Member</b>	<b>Company or Entity Name</b>
Jay Adams	ODOT Tribal Programs
Ray Ball	Kaw Nation of Oklahoma
James Battese	Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Ben Chaney	Muscogee Creek Nation
Michael Lynn	Cherokee Nation
Art Muller	Citizen Potawatomi Nation
Will Owens	The Comanche Tribe
Mike Talley	Chickasaw Nation
Chuck Tsoodle	Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma
R.J. Walker	Osage Nation

**Table 2-2. Personal Travel Advisory Committee**

<b>Advisory Committee Member</b>	<b>Company / Entity Name</b>
Isaac Akem	FHWA Planning
David Batson	Airport Express
Bonnie Buchanan	Jefferson Lines
Rick Cain	OKC/COTPA/Metro Transit
Bill Cartwright	Metropolitan Tulsa Transit Authority
John Dougherty	ODOT AmTrak Operations
Matthew Dowty	Oklahoma Passenger Rail Association
Patricia Fennell	Latino Community Development Agency
Beverly Graham	United We Ride
Randy Hogan	ODOT Transit Programs
Col. Dean Jackson	Oklahoma Alliance for Public Transportation
Rick Johnson	ODOT Enhancement Programs
Jean Jones	Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
Pete Kramer	Oklahoma Bicyclist Association
Pam Lankford	Oklahoma Airport Operators Association
C.M. Lin	Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Marla Mayberry	Tulsa Urban League
Ernestine Mbroh	ODOT Safe Routes to Schools
Matt Parsel	Stillwater Public Schools, Transportation Director
Cody Ponder	University of Oklahoma Transit Services
Bob Rusch	ODOT Bridge Division
Fred Schmitt	Greyhound Bus Lines
Charla Sloan	KI BOIS Area Transit System
Evan Stair	Passenger Rail Oklahoma/Northern Flyer Alliance
Charles Wesner	Oklahoma for New Trans Alternatives Coalition (ON TRAC)
Charlie Williams	Oklahoma Motorcycle Riders Foundation
Barbara Young	Oklahoma Good Roads

**Table 2-3. Freight Advisory Committee**

<b>Advisory Committee Member</b>	<b>Company / Entity Name</b>
Daryl Andrews	US Army Field Artillery School
Richard Andrews	ODOT–Project Management
Tim Armer	Indian Nations Council of Governments
Dan Case	Oklahoma Trucking Association
Pat Cedeno	Watco Railroads (Watco Companies, Inc.)
Glenn Cheatham	ODOT Waterways Branch
Terry Detrick	American Farmers & Ranchers
Scott Dewald	Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association
Bill Ford	Shawnee Milling (Agriculture MFG)
Joe Neal Hampton	Oklahoma Grain & Feed Association
Scott Keith	Will Rogers World Airport
Charles Kimbrough	Oklahoma Department of Commerce
Joe R. Kyle	ODOT Rail Division
John P. Kyle	Oklahoma Rail Association
Paul Matthews	Oklahoma Highway Users Federation
Marchie McCartney	State of Oklahoma Transportation Commission
David McCorkle	McCorkle Truck Lines
Capt. Craig Medcalf	Department of Public Safety
Joseph Lew Meibergen	Johnston’s Port #33
Jeff Mulder	Tulsa International Airport
Ken O’Donnell	BiState MPO
Terry Peach	Oklahoma Department of Agriculture
Lori Peterson	Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Robert Portiss	Port of Catoosa
Gen. David Ralston (Ret)	SW Oklahoma Regional Planning
Larry Ramsey	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association
Doug Rex	Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
Jim Rodriguez	Oklahoma Aggregates Association
Steve Savage	Arrow Trucking
Cathy Scheirman	Tinker AFB
Dean Schirf	Greater OKC Chamber of Commerce
Alan Stevenson, PE	ODOT Intelligent Transportation Systems
Wes Stucky	Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission
Wendy Taylor	Tulsa Metro Chamber of Commerce

**Table 2-4. Technical Advisory Committee**

<b>Advisory Committee Member</b>	<b>Company / Entity Name</b>
Rich Brierre	Indian Nations Council of Governments
Kim Cooper-Hart	Oklahoma Sustainability Network
Ken Crawford	The University of Oklahoma–Climatological Survey
Ron Cupp	Oklahoma State Chamber of Commerce
Gary Evans	ODOT Director of Operations
Justin Hodges	Hodges Trucking/Chesapeake Energy
John Johnson	Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
Gordon Johnson	Oklahoma Turnpike Authority
Ken LaRue	ODOT Transit Division
Kris Marek	Oklahoma Department of Tourism
Larry Nichols	Devon Energy
Elizabeth Romero	FHWA Planning
Bob Rose	ODOT Division 7, Duncan
Ray Sanders	ODOT Project Management
Shannon Sheffert	ODOT Local Government
Casey Shell	ODOT Division 4, Perry
Harold Smart	ODOT Traffic Engineering
Carolyn Stager	Oklahoma Municipal League
Scott Stegmann	ODOT Environmental Programs
Dawn Sullivan	ODOT Environmental Programs
Tim Tegeler	ODOT Roadway Design
Eddie Terrill	ODEQ–AQ
Mike Thralls	State of Oklahoma Conservation Commission
Gayle Ward	Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma
Trish Weedn	Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils

**Technical Advisory Committee themes and comments included:**

- ▶ Of the 21 respondents, 20 ranked “Highways” as the most important factor for economic development while 16 ranked “Freight Railroads” second or third.
- ▶ Of the 21 respondents, nine ranked “Increased maintenance of existing roadways” as the first priority to enhance person and passenger mobility followed by seven who ranked “Rail transit service within metropolitan areas” second.
- ▶ The factors that place barriers to traveling across the state were “Lack of connection between travel modes” and “Lack of integrated transit system.”
- ▶ Of the 21 respondents, 15 indicated that “Increased maintenance of existing roadways” was the first, second, or third most important action that could be taken to enhance goods movement.
- ▶ The majority of respondents ranked “Increased maintenance of roads and bridges” as the most important funding priority related to goods movement.

**Freight Advisory Committee themes and comments included:**

- ▶ Of the 27 respondents, 23 ranked “Highways” as the most important factor for economic development while 20 ranked “Freight Railroads” second or third.
- ▶ Of the 26 respondents, 13 indicated that “Increased maintenance of existing roadways” should be given first priority in funding decisions while seven gave “New or wider highways” second priority.

**Personal Travel Advisory Committee themes and comments included:**

- ▶ Of the 25 respondents, 20 ranked “Roadways” as the most important factor for mobility while 21 ranked “Public Transit”

second or third. An additional eight ranked sidewalks third.

- ▶ Of the 24 respondents, eight indicated that “Better maintenance of pavement and bridges” would do the most to improve safety followed by six who said “Longer merge lanes onto interstate” would help.
- ▶ The factors that place barriers to traveling across the state were “Lack of connection between travel modes” and “Lack of integrated transit system.”
- ▶ The “Barriers to travel within a community” included “Inadequate bus service,” “Lack of bike paths, bike lanes, et al.,” and “Highway construction.”
- ▶ Of the 26 respondents, 13 indicated that “Increased maintenance of existing roadways” should be given first priority in funding decisions while seven gave “New or wider highways” second priority.

**Tribal Advisory Committee themes and comments included:**

- ▶ Of the five respondents, two ranked “Increased maintenance on existing roadways” as the most important factor for mobility while three ranked “New or expanded highways” as second.
- ▶ Respondents identified the following barriers to traveling across the state: “Lack of connection between travel modes”, and “Lack of connection between urban and rural transit providers.”
- ▶ All five respondents said “Increased maintenance of existing roadways” should be given first priority in funding decisions.

**Emerging Plan Goals**

Following a presentation of interview results and the federal planning factors (following) at the first round of Advisory Committee meetings, the comments from the four groups were analyzed to refine Plan goals that addressed the federal statewide plan

requirements and were customized to reflect Oklahoma needs and values. The State planning factors from SAFETEA-LU include:

- ▶ Support economic vitality
- ▶ Increase the safety of the transportation system
- ▶ Increase the security of the transportation system
- ▶ Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight
- ▶ Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and economic development patterns
- ▶ Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system
- ▶ Promote efficient system management and operation and,
- ▶ Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

**Figure 2-2** shows the Plan goals, organized by themes that emerged following consultation and coordination with Advisory Committee members. The theme is stated first, followed by goals related to the theme. (This grouping is loosely organized and is not intended to be exclusive or rigid in its structure.)

#### **SAFETEA-LU**

The federal *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* was signed into law in August 2005.

### **2035 Oklahoma Long Range Transportation Plan Themes and Goals**

#### **Theme: Safety and Security**

##### **Goals:**

- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
- Improve safety for all modes
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users

#### **Theme: Travel Options for People**

##### **Goals:**

- Increase accessibility and mobility options available to people
- Enhance integration and connectivity of the transportation system

#### **Theme: On the Move ... New Issues and Ideas**

##### **Goals:**

- Protect and enhance the environment
- Promote energy conservation
- Improve the quality of life

#### **Theme: System Preservation and Operation**

##### **Goals:**

- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system
- Promote efficient system management and operation
- Enhance integration and connectivity of the transportation system across and between modes throughout the state for people and freight

#### **Theme: Freight and the Economy**

##### **Goals:**

- Enhance integration and connectivity of the transportation system
- Support economic vitality

**Figure 2-2. 2035 Long Range Plan Themes and Goals**



## Focus on Traditionally Underserved Populations

### Initial Objectives

The Public Involvement Plan gave special emphasis to involving traditionally under-served populations. These populations typically include low income, cultural, racial, or ethnic populations who often experience barriers to participation in the public decision-making process. The following actions were planned to identify under-represented populations and to encourage their participation:

- ▶ Analyzing U.S. Census demographic data
- ▶ Coordinating with planning agencies to identify organizations representing such populations
- ▶ Coordinating with community and neighborhood groups
- ▶ Hosting additional public outreach activities for traditionally under-served populations.

### Results

Langston University assisted ODOT in identifying concentrations of traditionally under-served populations. As a result of this work, communication and supplemental meeting locations were selected to offer additional opportunities to interact with the identified groups. The university was responsible for satisfying the requirements of the *Americans with Disability Act of 1990* (42 USC 12.01 et seq.) as it pertains to all printed and electronic materials. The university provided five hard copies and two electronic copies of all deliverables as follows:

- ▶ A report identifying geographic regions of the state with higher than average population densities of historically under-served populations. The report included four statewide maps showing age distribution, income levels, education levels, and population by ethnicity.

- ▶ A report of recommended strategies for outreach to historically under-served populations.

Information regarding meetings was sent to a variety of stakeholders and was available online. For the survey, a Spanish version was available online and at the public meetings. Vietnamese versions were also brought to select meeting venues. The project website was accessible to those with disabilities. While the original goal for public meetings was to hold eight throughout the state, ODOT identified the need for additional outreach, holding a total of 14 public meetings in November 2009 and another seven in August 2010.

Of the 291 people who took the survey that was available online and at the public meetings, the following socio-demographic breakdown shows wide participation:

- ▶ By gender
  - Female: 40 percent
  - Male: 60 percent
- ▶ By race
  - White: 73 percent
  - Black: 11 percent
  - Native American: 10 percent
  - Asian: 1.5 percent
  - Other: 4.5 percent (includes 3 percent who identified themselves as Hispanic)

A comparison of the demographic characteristics of the survey participants compared to the State's profile (see Table 4-4, Race and Ethnicity of the Oklahoma Population, 1990–2007) shows the respondents to be fairly representative of the overall State. African American survey participation is higher (11 compared to 7.5 percent statewide) as is Native American (10 versus 6.8 percent statewide). White is comparable (73 versus 74.9 percent statewide) and so is Asian/Pacific Islander (1.5 versus 1.7 percent).



## Awareness Building Activities

### Initial Objectives

One of the purposes of the Public Involvement Plan for the 2035 Long Range Plan was to build awareness in the State about the Plan process. ODOT used tools, including a project logo, press releases, unique website, and speakers bureau, to attract and engage different segments of the public.

### Results

**Project Identity and Branding**—A logo was created to identify the long range plan process and its consistency with ODOT’s overall mission.

This clear, consistent image provided positive reinforcement and easy identification of project components. The image was developed at the initiation of the project, used on all written materials, and displayed at public meetings (**Figure 2-3**).

**Kickoff/Press Releases**—At the initiation of the project, ODOT prepared a press release to attract media attention statewide for help with distributing information about the project and to promote interest in participating in the planning process.

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### Mission

"The mission of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is to provide a safe, economical, and effective transportation network for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma."

### What are our transportation priorities for tomorrow?

The 2035 Long Range Plan, formally known as the 2010 - 2035 Statewide Intermodal Transportation Plan (SITP), is a guide to develop the state's transportation system to promote better mobility in and around Oklahoma communities for the next 20 years. The study includes all means of person travel as well as goods movement. The study will address roads, bridges, transit, rail facilities, airport access, ports, pedestrians & cyclists.

The Long Range Plan updates the current status of transportation in the state, identifies future needs, outlines financing options and captures the desires of the public.

The planning process should answer some vital questions like:

- "How can we improve our transportation system?"
- "What are our transportation priorities for tomorrow?"
- "How do we pay for transportation system improvements in the future?"

Outcomes of the Long Range Transportation Plan include policy recommendations on planning and funding objectives to the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and elected and government officials.

The Plan will help:

- identify the state's transportation priorities, strengths and challenges

**Meetings Set for LRP Draft and STIP**  
Public encouraged to attend one of 6 meetings Aug 23-27, 2010

**Draft LRP Policy for Public Review**  
ODOT LRP draft policies available for review. Please provide us with your comments.

**Public Provides Feedback**  
View summaries of the public input gathered through December 2009, including survey results.

**Have a Question?**  
Have more questions about the Long Range Plan? We've compiled an informative list of FAQs.

Figure 2-3. 2035 Long Range Plan Website



Information went to all daily newspapers with large circulation, minority newspapers, weekly publications, special interest publications, and television, both broadcast and cable, and radio programs statewide for each major milestone and round of public meetings. Project updates were included in the press releases. The same information was posted on the project website (Figure 2-3). All direct media contact was coordinated with ODOT's Media and Public Relations Division.

**Website**—The Public website ([www.oklongrangeplan.com](http://www.oklongrangeplan.com)) provided current project information and allowed access to project reports and newsletters (Figure 2-3). The site was linked to the homepage of the ODOT website: [www.ODOT.org](http://www.ODOT.org). Stakeholder organizations were invited to provide a link from their websites. The website provided general information about the project and its progress.

The site was designed to solicit comments and host surveys for the general public. The website provided users with an opportunity to add their names to the mailing list or submit comments to the project team. A project schedule and postings of upcoming meetings was maintained. From the launch of the website to the project conclusion, more than 3,000 hits were recorded. By the end of 2010, a total of 247 online comments were recorded.

**Speakers Bureau**—ODOT maintained a list of speakers to respond to requests to attend neighborhood, business, and special interest group meetings. To provide consistency, a presentation and associated materials were prepared. Presentation materials focused on the project's purpose and need, the planning process, the public involvement program, and schedule.

## Community Outreach

### *Initial Objectives*

One of the Public Involvement Plan goals was to connect with the community and make groups and individuals aware that the Department wanted to engage the community in the 2035 Long Range Plan process. To accomplish this outreach, ODOT used a stakeholder database, meeting notices, public meetings, and other communication tools.

### *Results*

**Database**—ODOT created and maintained a database of contacts and an e-mail distribution list. Through this database, people were sent information, such as the announcements of the public meetings, summaries of the public feedback received, and survey results. As of October 2010, ODOT had a database of 1,100 e-mail contacts and another 500 mail contacts.

**Meeting Notices/Newspaper Ads**—Three press releases were issued announcing the first round of 14 public meetings that were held in November 2009, the launch of the Long Range Plan website, and the announcement of the second round of seven public meetings in August 2010. A paid public notice placed in newspapers of general circulation was also issued prior to the November meetings.

**Public Meetings**—ODOT conducted 14 public meetings between November 2 and November 17, 2009, across the state. They held another seven public meetings between August 23 and August 27, 2010.

- ▶ About 263 members of the public attended the November 2009 meetings (excluding staff), and nearly 100 comment forms were submitted at or after the meetings.
- ▶ Approximately 220 meeting attendees also indicated their desired focus of transpor-

tation efforts by indicating their preference for five strategies.

- Of the five themes/categories (see Figure 2-2), the highest percentage (29 percent) was placed in the Travel Options for People.
  - The second highest percent (23 percent) was in the Safety and Security category.
  - The Preservation and Operation category earned 18 percent.
  - The categories of New Issues and Ideas (address transportation needs for aging population, new funding options) and Freight and the Economy (improve State-owned rail corridors, consider special lanes for truck traffic) garnered 17 and 13 percent, respectively.
  - The majority of comments were supportive of policies to support increased transit, rail, and improved bicycle facilities, followed by support for specific roadway projects.
- ▶ Another 94 members of the public attended the August 2010 meetings, and 64 comments were received through the website by the end of September. Some of the themes revealed by the public included
- Expand and interconnect a public transit system that includes both bus and rail and that links rural, urban, and tribal communities
  - Incorporate sidewalks and bicycle lanes into transportation projects
  - Enhance coordination between ODOT and other entities, such as the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority and Fort Sill
  - Find new sources of funding or dedicate a funding source to transportation
  - Address increasing freight traffic by improving both truck and freight rail system and facilities.

## Education and Feedback

### *Initial Objectives*

Offering opportunities for education and feedback was an important part of the public involvement process. To accomplish this education/feedback goal, the Department elected to use project newsletters, fact sheets, web-based surveys, web comment pages, comment forms, and distribution of Plan reports.

### *Results*

**Newsletter**—A newsletter was published after the first quarter of the project. This was utilized to provide electronic and hard copy notice to interested individuals that the project had been initiated with Advisory Committee participation and public meetings scheduled throughout the State. Following this publication, it was determined that maintaining the website with information about the project status, including regular updates to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section of the website, would be a more efficient and effective way to communicate with many interested individuals. As a means of addressing non-computer users, all public libraries and city clerks were included in the stakeholder mailing list. Individuals on this list received status reports from ODOT at the half and three-quarter marks of the project and were asked to share information with other contacts, including users and customers.

**Fact Sheets/Handouts**—Start-up activities included the development of a one-page introduction to the process, featuring the role of ODOT, explaining the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and how to be involved in the process. These sheets were published in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese and were distributed at the public meetings.



**Web Based Survey**—A web-based survey was developed to ask questions regarding transportation needs, problems, investment strategies, and public outreach. The survey was an important tool used to gather initial public feedback on a variety of topics. It was available online and at the initial round of 14 public meetings in Spanish, Vietnamese, and English. The survey was available to the public between October 26, 2009, and December 1, 2009. It took an average of 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

- ▶ About 291 surveys were submitted
  - Approximately 164 submitted responses at the initial round public meetings or mailed in surveys following the meetings.
- ▶ General summary
  - Emphasize maintenance of roads and bridges
  - Utilize resources for new/wider highways
  - Include rail transportation and increased Amtrak service as an option for passenger travel
  - Insufficient coordination between urban and rural transit providers and lack of connection between modes is a significant barrier to travel across the state
  - Transportation improvements need to be paid for. Most preferred methods indicated by respondents were: increased diesel tax, new dedicated sales tax, increased gas tax
- ▶ Predominant themes/comments
  - Emphasis on maintenance of roads and bridges
  - New passenger rail service and expansion of current Amtrak service
  - New or wider highways
  - Coordination between urban and rural transit providers

- Better connections between freight modes of transportation.
- Better connections between passenger modes of transportation
- Concern about how to pay for needed transportation improvements
- ▶ As part of the long range plan survey, respondents were allotted a section to make other comments. Of the 291 people submitting surveys, 106 made specific comments within their survey. The most popular topics were the following:
  - Twenty-five respondents support repairs/widening/fixing of roads
  - Twenty-five respondents support rail service
  - Eleven respondents support bus/transit service
  - Ten respondents opposed any tax or fee increase to improve transportation in Oklahoma
  - Six respondents called for focus on multiple transportation modes when planning new or improved routes

**Web Comment Page**—Comments were solicited through the website and commenter's received an automatic response thanking them and indicating that a response would be forthcoming to any question. By the end of 2010, ODOT received 247 online comments. Many comments were about the Long Range Plan; approximately 30 comments were received about specific projects related to the STIP or the 8-Year Construction Plan. All questions were answered either by e-mail or U.S. postal mail, in reply with the method in which the question was received.

**Comment Form**—A one-page comment form was distributed at all meetings open to the public. Participants were invited to respond and return the form at the meeting or mail or fax it to the Planning and Research Division at ODOT.

Comments were summarized by category and provided to the appropriate team members for incorporation into the technical work, as appropriate.

***Distribution of Reports***—Copies of Draft Plan Policies were posted on the website in late 2010 and also distributed at Public Meetings. The 2035 Long Range Plan summary and document will be available on the Department’s website, at the State Library, and at ODOT upon project completion.

***Other***—Copies of PowerPoint presentations were developed and presented at public meetings, and other printed materials were also provided. For members of the public who wished to speak to ODOT staff about the Plan, an ODOT Long Range Plan contact person was identified, and business cards and telephone contact information were circulated at public meetings and other informal gatherings. Similarly, ODOT offered information as to how to contact the Long Range Plan public involvement coordinator at the Department by U.S. postal mail.

## **Conclusion**

The public outreach and public involvement methods utilized by ODOT resulted in a varied and robust view of public sentiment. Rather than relying solely on public meetings to capture public feedback, ODOT used other tools as well that helped synthesize public opinion. In total, more than 1,000 people attended a meeting or provided comments during the outreach process. Through a public e-mail and mail contact list, over 1,500 people were kept up-to-date on new developments with the 2035 Long Range Plan.