

## 4. STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

Public involvement was an important component in the process of developing the 2015-2040 LRTP. At the outset of this process, ODOT created a detailed Public Participation Plan (PPP) specifically for the 2015-2040 LRTP. The PPP was used in conjunction with a robust stakeholder contact list. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's publication, *The Transportation Planning Process: Key Issues*, stakeholders are defined as individuals and organizations involved in or affected by the transportation planning process. ODOT recognizes that stakeholder input is critical in order to understand the transportation needs of Oklahoma and to develop policy recommendations to guide future investment decisions.

### 4.1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The PPP presents the process and communication methods/tools for encouraging citizens, affected organizations, and other interested parties to be involved in developing the 2015-2040 LRTP. In essence, this PPP is a roadmap with the overall goal of maximizing public engagement and information by creating opportunities for stakeholders to provide input.

Federal legislation and policies, which include the following, guided the development of the PPP:

- MAP-21 requires formal documentation of the public involvement process used for statewide planning. The Public Participation Plan is the formal documentation required by federal law, and it provides procedures that are inclusive, timely, and complete.
- 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."<sup>1</sup> ODOT complies with Title VI and provided open and inclusive access to transportation decision-making for all persons through the 2015-2040 LRTP public involvement process. Additionally, ODOT reached out to the Native American population by notifying representatives of the Tribal governments in Oklahoma of the Plan development process.
- 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."<sup>2</sup> ODOT complied with this executive order by providing opportunities for participation in the LRTP public involvement process for all people.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 specifies 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 will make special provisions for hearing or vision impaired individuals. In addition, ODOT's 2015-2040 LRTP web site is ADA-compliant and ODOT will provide written materials in alternative formats upon request.
- 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. Arrangements may be made for provision of interpretation

services so that information is accessible to all people including non-English-speaking populations. A brochure explaining the purpose of state and regional Long Range Transportation Plans, the proposed 2015-2040 LRTP goals, and public involvement opportunities was made available at the public meetings and on the project web site. The brochure was prepared in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese in accordance with ODOT’s Limited English Proficiency language assistance plan.

The 2015-2040 LRTP’s PPP is consistent with ODOT’s PPP, which meets the federal requirements for statewide planning as outlined in MAP-21.

## 4.2. COMMUNICATION METHODS/ TOOLS

ODOT conducted a variety of public engagement activities during the 2015-2040 LRTP process with the purpose of reaching a diverse audience of individual stakeholders and partner agencies. The public outreach methods used throughout the LRTP process, included convening three Advisory Committees, hosting public meetings, utilizing educational videos and social media feeds, and sponsoring the project web site.



#### 4.2.1. Stakeholder Identification

The public participation process involved early identification of stakeholders. ODOT developed and maintained an electronic database of contacts and a related email distribution list. The stakeholder list includes but is not limited to individuals in the following groups:

- state and federal agencies responsible for aviation, conservation, commerce, environmental quality, public safety, and transportation;
- state legislators;
- county commissioners;
- MPOs;
- rural councils of government;
- tribal transportation directors;
- city managers;
- transit providers;
- freight associations; and
- public libraries.

In addition, over 600 other persons are on the stakeholder list. The database can be appended with new names at any time at the request of an interested party. Approximately 140 people signed in during the 2015-2040 LRTP process.

#### 4.2.2. Planning Partners

At the outset of the 2015-2040 LRTP planning process, ODOT hosted a briefing meeting with local FHWA and MPO staff. At the time of goals development and needs identification, the MPOs were again contacted for their input. When interim products related to freight planning and congestion management were made available ODOT invited the MPOs to review and comment.

The MPOs are also in the process of developing their own long range transportation plans, and ODOT participates in their routine and special plan committee processes as well. Representatives of FHWA and the MPOs were also invited to participate in the 2015-2040 LRTP Advisory Committees.

#### 4.2.3. Advisory Committee Meetings

ODOT identified and invited participants to serve on three Advisory Committees, with each committee meeting twice to provide input toward the development of the 2015-2040 LRTP. The three committees were as follows: Tribal Advisory Committee, Personal Travel Advisory Committee, and Freight Advisory Committee. **Table 4-1** through **Table 4-3** show a list of the participants by committee.

**Table 4-1. Tribal Advisory Committee**

Advisory Committee Member	Company or Entity Name
Milton Sovo	Caddo Nation
Robert Endicott	Cherokee Nation
Angel Blind	Cheyenne & Arapaho
James Battese	Miami Tribe
Jennifer Ann Varao	Osage Nation
Richard McCulley	Seminole Nation
Denea White	Seminole Nation
Rhonda Fair	ODOT Environmental Programs, Cultural Resources
Jay Adams	ODOT Tribal Programs

**Table 4-2. Personal Travel Advisory Committee**

Advisory Committee Member	Company or Entity Name
David Batson	Airport Express
Chuck Mai	American Automobile Association - Oklahoma
Mark Magliari	AMTRAK
Lan Truong	Asian Chamber of Oklahoma
Holly Massie	Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG)
Peter Seikel	Central Oklahoma Economic Development District (COEDD)
Elizabeth Romero	Federal Highway Administration
Derek Sparks	Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
Evan Burak	Greyhound
Don Hummer	Heartland Flyer Passenger Rail Coalition
Viplav Putta	Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG)
Bonnie Buchanan	Jefferson Bus Lines
Rubin Aragon	Latino Community Development Agency
Jeannie McMillan	Little Dixie Transit - Little Dixie Community Action Agency
Lauren Branch	Oklahoma Alliance for Public Transportation
Jason Ferbrache	Oklahoma City Transit - EMBARK
Valerie Thompson	Oklahoma City Urban League
Mark Jones	Oklahoma Department of Human Services
Bonnie Winslow	Oklahoma Department of Human Services
Jean Jones	Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
Garry Thomas	Oklahoma Highway Safety Office
Andy Huddleston	Oklahoma Motorcycle Riders Foundation
Bill Cartwright	(Metropolitan) Tulsa Transit Authority
Donald Tyler	Tulsa Urban League
Karleene Smith	University of Oklahoma - Norman Transit Services (CART)
Sharlotte Key	Washita Valley Transit-WV Community Action Council

**Table 4-3. Freight Advisory Committee**

Advisory Committee Member	Company or Entity Name
Darla Hugaboom	Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG)
French Thompson	BNSF
John Caldwell	Chesapeake Energy
Kermit Frank	Dolese Brothers Company
Richard Jurey	Federal Highway Administration
Larry Ramsey	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association
Julie Miner	Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG)
David McCorkle	McCorkle Truck Lines
Jim Rodriguez	Oklahoma Aggregates Association
Michael Kelsey	Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association
Patricia Franz	Oklahoma Corporation Commission
Martin Roberts	Oklahoma Department of Commerce
Lt. Ron Jenkins	Oklahoma Highway Patrol
Lori Peterson	Oklahoma Railroad Association
Maressa Treat	Oklahoma State Chamber of Commerce
Dan Case	Oklahoma Trucking Association
Tim Stewart	Oklahoma Turnpike Authority
Scott Robinson	Port of Muskogee
Pat Foster	Stillwater Central (WATCO)
Cathy Scheirman	Tinker Air Force Base
Jeff Mulder	Tulsa International Airport
David Yarbrough	Tulsa Port of Catoosa
D. Shane Charlson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
John Westbrook	U.S. Army Field Artillery School, Ft. Sill
Scott Keith	Will Rogers World Airport

**First Round of Advisory Committees**

The Personal Travel Advisory Committee met on June 10, 2014 and the Freight Travel Advisory Committee met on June 11, 2014. The Tribal Transportation Advisory Committee met on July 17, 2014. The committees discussed existing conditions, planning issues, goals, objectives, and performance measures. Regarding planning issues, they participated in an exercise where they identified important transportation issues for the next 25 years in Oklahoma (see **Table 4-4**). In addition, each committee agreed that the proposed Plan goals were acceptable to use in the 2015-2040 LRTP.



**Table 4-4. Important Transportation Planning Issues to Address in 2015-2040 LRTP**

Topic	Transportation Planning Issue
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridge access for bikes</li> <li>• Improving access to secondary roads and State Highway System</li> <li>• Safer pedestrian facilities – on cross streets for community accessibility</li> <li>• Wheel chair accessible ramps</li> </ul>
Commerce/Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freight Impact on communities</li> <li>• Increased demand for Fulfillment (warehouse and shipping) Centers</li> <li>• International trade impact – imports and exports</li> <li>• Panama Canal expansion</li> </ul>
Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congestion of freight rail and truck transport at/near ports</li> <li>• Address congestion/too many cars by increasing passenger rail service</li> <li>• Urbanization of population</li> </ul>
Environmental Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage use of more environmentally friendly transportation options</li> </ul>
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What’s (transportation improvement) important to whom?</li> </ul>
Freight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of truck drivers, truck weight restrictions</li> <li>• Get more trucks off the road by implementing a better freight rail system</li> </ul>
Funding and Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less fuel tax revenue due to efficient vehicles</li> </ul>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal vs. local infrastructure</li> <li>• Leadership and local issues</li> </ul>
Maintenance and Preservation of the System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better maintenance of existing transportation facilities – longer lasting, more durable repairs</li> <li>• Bridges – structurally deficient</li> <li>• Deteriorating infrastructure</li> <li>• Maintenance of right-of-way</li> </ul>
Modal Choice/Mode Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High speed passenger rail</li> <li>• Intermodal service in Oklahoma</li> <li>• More adequate transportation hubs</li> <li>• Safe connections between modes</li> </ul>
Public Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult for rural transit to move to alternative fuels, inadequate stations and/or infrastructure</li> <li>• Reliability of public transit for rural areas</li> </ul>
Research, Technology and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deployment of technology</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distracted driving</li> <li>• Ease transitions between highway segments and bridges for motorcycle safety</li> <li>• Increase in injuries due to congestion</li> <li>• Pedestrian safety</li> <li>• Safe access to entry points to transit, sidewalks</li> <li>• Safety - texting while driving</li> </ul>



## Second Round of Advisory Committees

The Personal Travel, Freight and Tribal Transportation Advisory Committees met again in November 2014. The committees were provided with a status report on public comments, performance measures, demographics, congestion analysis, modal needs, and baseline revenue projections. The committees gave input on policy considerations relating to the various modes of travel.

### 4.2.4. Public Meetings

Two rounds of open house public meetings were conducted during the development of the 2015-2040 LRTP. These meetings served to provide information to the public about the study through display boards and other materials, and through opportunities for dialogue with ODOT staff and consultants. Feedback was received through verbal comments, comment cards, or via the project web site.



Both rounds of public meetings were promoted through placing a legal notice in statewide newspapers and providing a press release to over 400 media contacts including industry partners, transportation groups, and federal state and local agencies. The media coverage is provided to weekly and daily newspapers, radio and television stations. Stakeholders received a “save the date” email and meeting notice. Additionally, social media outlets such as Twitter were used to promote public meetings.

### June 2014 Open Houses

The first round of meetings was held in Muskogee, Moore, and Clinton, Oklahoma on June 10, 11, and 12, 2014, respectively. Each public meeting was set up with five stations describing project background and introduction, draft goals and objectives, performance measures, an inventory of the existing transportation, and options for public involvement. A total of 44 people attended these meetings, and 20 comment cards were received.

A total of 53 comments were received through the project web site. One letter and five comments were received by email. Each attendee was asked to identify his/her top five transportation issues looking toward the year 2040. An exhibit board with several issues listed was used to record their choices. The top three transportation issues selected, in order, were:

1. Highway Safety;
2. Shoulders on Rural Roads; and
3. Passenger Rail.

The comment cards revealed that there was a high level of agreement with the proposed 2015-2040 LRTP goals. The following goals were identified as *most important*:

- Infrastructure Preservation;
- Mobility Choice, Connectivity and Accessibility; and
- Economic Vitality

The remaining goals were rated as *important* to the 2015-2040 LRTP planning process, as follows.

- Safe and Secure Travel;
- Environmental Responsibility; and
- Efficient Intermodal System Management and Operation.

Additionally, attendees identified numerous other issues as important to consider while developing the 2015-2040 LRTP.

### November 2014 Open Houses

The second round of meetings was held again in Muskogee, Clinton, and Moore, Oklahoma on November 17, 18, and 19, 2014, respectively. Each public meeting was set up with five stations where the following information was available: 2015-2040 LRTP progress report, goals and performance measures, modal needs, baseline revenue forecast, and options for public engagement. A total of 34 people attended these meetings, and 24 comment cards were received at the meetings along with eight more through the project web site.

The comments cards provided feedback on the following questions, with the top three answers listed in hierarchy from highest to lowest preference.

- *Why is transportation important to you?*
  - Helps economic development
  - Moves people and goods safely
  - Supports existing businesses
- *Think of yourself and where you might be in 25 years. What transportation functions will be most important to you when you are 25 years older than you are today?*
  - Transportation that gets me to work and/or vital services
  - Transportation that moves people and goods safely
  - Transportation that helps economic development
- *Given the current reality of funding, what revenue strategies would best support Oklahoma's transportation needs?*
  - Reduce other government expenditures to generate additional transportation funding
  - Increase state transportation taxes
  - Increase federal transportation taxes

- *Based on the review of the needs described on the boards, what are your priorities for the next 25 years?*
  - Highway and bridge improvements
  - Bicycle and pedestrian ways
  - Rural transit services

### 4.2.5. Project Web Site

ODOT set up a project web site to provide access to current project information for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (**Figure 4-1**). The web site was activated on June 1, 2014. The web site address is [www.oklongrangeplan.org](http://www.oklongrangeplan.org), and it is linked to ODOT's main web site. The web site content consisted of background information, project goals and objectives, project status reports, project schedule information, FAQs, contact information, information regarding future public meetings, and public meeting summaries and materials.

The project web site was promoted through press releases to the media, as well as online through social media releases (Twitter only) that pushed the news out to appropriate internet and social media outlets. Other promotional efforts included eBlasts to stakeholders at several interim points during the Plan development process, and providing informational materials at other transportation-related events being conducted throughout the state.

The web site provided users with an opportunity to add their names to the notification list or submit comments to the project team. More than one hundred users requested notifications regarding the 2015-2040 LRTP. From the launch of the web site to date, more than 13,000 page views were recorded. By the end of March 2015, a total of 66 online comments were recorded (web site and email).



Figure 4-1. 2015-2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Web Site



#### 4.2.6. Draft Plan and Document Distribution

ODOT held a public comment period following the availability of the Draft 2015-2040 LRTP document in early Summer 2015. During this time period, the 2015-2040 LRTP document was available on the project web site. Stakeholders, including all public libraries in the state, were advised of its availability. Following the public comment period, ODOT summarized the comments and provided the summary along with the document to the Oklahoma Transportation Commission for approval. The 2015-2040 LRTP document is available on the Department’s web site, at the State Library, and at ODOT.

#### 4.3. ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> *United States Congress, 1964.*
- <sup>2</sup> *United States Executive Office, 1994.*