

Public Involvement Plan



OKLAHOMA
Transportation

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List of Abbreviations

ACOG	Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Assessment
EJ	Environmental Justice
FAST Act	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
Frontier	Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
INCOG	Indian Nations Council of Governments
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LMPO	Lawton Metropolitan Planning Organization
LRTP	Long-Range Transportation Plan
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century Act
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MPR	Media and Public Relations
MTPs	Metropolitan Transportation Plans
NAOPH	Notice Affording Opportunity for Public Hearing
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
ODOT	Oklahoma Department of Transportation
OMPT	Office of Mobility and Public Transit
SAPM	Strategic Asset & Performance Management
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
TAB	Tribal Advisory Board
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
TTIP	Tribal Transportation Improvements Plans
UZA	Urbanized Area

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) Public Involvement Plan is to outline methods for encouraging the involvement of residents, employers, businesses, affected organizations, and other interested parties to inform the agency's decisions. ODOT recognizes that public involvement plays an essential role in decisions concerning planning, programming, development, construction, and maintenance of the state transportation system. The objective of this Public Involvement Plan is to:

- Create an increased level of confidence and transparency in ODOT's transportation planning and decision-making process.
- Conduct outreach early in the transportation planning and decision-making process to enhance and inform decisions to create a better transportation system.
- Tailor public involvement strategies for affected communities, including meeting venues, communication styles, and technologies that are accessible to them, including underrepresented populations.
- Ensure continuous public involvement throughout all phases of project development.
- Comply with authorization acts for federal transportation programs, such as Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21).
- Comply with environmental, historic preservation, and non-discrimination laws, regulations, policies, and guidance, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Title VI, Environmental Justice (EJ), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

State and federal laws provide for the right to participate and the right to know about public decision-making. However, public involvement is more than a legal requirement. The public involvement process is vital for good decision making, consideration of various ideas, reducing misunderstandings, and avoiding or resolving conflict. Engaging and involving the public contributes to a well-planned and implemented transportation system. Public involvement is a tool to help us achieve ODOT's mission of providing a safe, economical, and effective transportation network for the people, commerce, and communities of Oklahoma. This plan can be found on ODOT's Public Meeting website along with the current meeting schedule at www.odot.org/publicmeetings.

2.0 The Importance of Public Involvement

"Public participation is an integral part of the transportation process which helps to ensure that decisions are made in consideration of and to benefit public needs and preferences."

– Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Public Involvement is important in transportation planning not only because of Federal requirements, but also because communities being impacted have insight into their community's infrastructure that ODOT may not have. Communication early in the planning process can allow public concerns to be addressed and can contribute to sustainable decision-making. When public involvement is a two-way process, both the agency and the public can benefit.

The current public involvement requirements for state, local, and metropolitan plans and programs established by federal legislation are found in Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). For more specific details, consult the regulations directly, which can be found online at www.ecfr.gov.

The following table summarizes regulatory requirements, the location of the regulation in statutory code, and a brief description of their applicability to public involvement. The reader is directed to the primary source of the regulations for more specific information on context and implementation.

2.1 Federal Aid Requirements

Subject	Regulatory Act	Regulation
Accessible Locations and Activities	Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504	"No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 7(20) shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service."
Air Quality Conformity	40 CFR §93.105	"Affected agencies making conformity determinations on transportation plans, programs, and projects shall establish a proactive public involvement process which provides opportunity for public review and comment by, at a minimum, providing reasonable public access to technical and policy information considered by the agency at the beginning of the public comment period and prior to taking formal action on a conformity determination for all transportation plans and TIP's consistent with these requirement and those of 23 CFR 450.316(a)."
Americans with Disabilities Act	28 CFR §35.149	"Except as otherwise provided in §35.150, no qualified individual with a disability shall, because a public entity's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity."

Subject	Regulatory Act	Regulation
Early Coordination, Public Involvement, and Project Development	23 CFR §771.111 (a)(I)	“Early coordination with appropriate agencies and the public aids in determining the type of environmental review documents an action requires, the scope of the document, the level of analysis, and related environmental requirements.”
	23 CFR §771.111 (h)(I)	“For the Federal-aid highway program, each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program.”
Electronic Information	23 CFR §450.210 (vi)	“To maximize extent practicable, make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information.”
	Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508	This establishes requirements for electronic and information technology developed, maintained, procured, or used by the Federal government. Section 508 requires Federal electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public.
Environmental Impacts	42 USC §4321-4347	National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) established a national environmental policy focused on Federal activities and the desire for a sustainable environment balanced with other essential needs of present and future generations. Also established a Council on Environmental Quality.
	23 USC §138	Section 4(f) requirements stipulate that FHWA and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites unless the following conditions apply: There is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative to the use of land; and the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use or The Administration determines that the use of the property will have a de minimis impact.
Historic Properties	36 CFR §800.1	“Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and afford the Council a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings.”

Subject	Regulatory Act	Regulation
Improving Transparency in Environmental Reviews	23 USC §139	“Make publicly available the status and progress of projects requiring an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement with respect to compliance with applicable requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and any other Federal, State, or local approval required for those projects.”
Interested Parties, Public Involvement	23 CFR §450.210 (a)	“Providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.”
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	Executive Order 13166	This LEP Guidance sets forth the compliance standards that recipients of Federal financial assistance must follow to ensure that their programs and activities normally provided in English are accessible to LEP persons and thus do not discriminate on the basis of national origin in violation of Title VI's prohibition against national origin discrimination.
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	23 CFR §450.316	The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing all interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The MPO must coordinate with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes.
Prohibiting Discrimination	Executive Order 12898	“Each Federal agency shall make achieving Environmental Justice (EJ) 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 and low-income populations.”
	FHWA Order 6640.23A	“Establishes policies and procedures for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to use in complying with Executive Order 12898.”
	DOT Order 5610.2(a)	“It is the policy of DOT to promote the principles of EJ (as embodied in the Executive Order) through the incorporation of those principles in all DOT programs, policies, and activities. This will be done by fully considering environmental justice principles throughout planning and decision-making processes in the development of programs, policies, and activities

Subject	Regulatory Act	Regulation
	Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964	“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”
	23 USC §109 (h)	“Assure that possible adverse economic, social, and environmental effects relating to any proposed project on any Federal-aid system have been fully considered in developing such project, and that the final decisions on the project are made in the best overall public interest.”
	23 CFR §200.9(14)	“Establish procedures to identify and eliminate discrimination when found to exist.”
	49 CFR §21.9(b)	Each recipient shall keep such records and submit to the Secretary timely, complete, and accurate compliance reports at such times, and in such form and containing such information, as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to enable him to ascertain whether the recipient has complied or is complying with this part.
	42 USC §6101	“It is the purpose of this chapter to prohibit discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.”
	23 CFR §450.210 (viii)	“Include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.”
Public Hearings	23 USC §128	“Any State transportation department which submits plans for a Federal-aid highway project involving the by passing of or, going through any city, town, or village, either incorporated or unincorporated, shall certify to the Secretary that it has had public hearings, or has afforded the opportunity for such hearings, and has considered the economic and social effects of such a location, its impact on the environment, and its consistency with the goals and objectives of such urban planning as has been promulgated by the community.”
	23 CFR §450.210 (iv)	“To the maximum extent practicable, ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and times.”
	40 CFR §1506.6 (b)	“Provide public notice of NEPA-related hearings, public meetings, and the availability of environmental documents so as to inform those persons and agencies who may be interested or affected.”

Subject	Regulatory Act	Regulation
	Government Sunshine Act, §552b (e)(1)	“In the case of each meeting, the agency shall make public announcement, at least one week before the meeting, of the time, place, and subject matter of the meeting, whether it is to be open or closed to the public, and the name and phone number of the official designated by the agency to respond to requests for information about the meeting.”
Public Participation Plan	23 CFR §450.210	“The State shall develop and use a documented public involvement process that provides opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points.”

2.2 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NEPA was enacted to establish a comprehensive national framework for protecting the environment. The essential principle is to ensure that all federal agencies assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. NEPA requirements are implemented when federal agencies approve or fund actions involving airports, buildings, military complexes, highways, parkland purchases, and other federal activities. Federal agencies are required to conduct assessments of the impacts from the different courses of action that may meet the project’s purpose and need. The purpose of NEPA is ensure that environmental effects are weighted equally when compared to other factors in the planning and decision-making process.

Public Involvement is a primary component of NEPA. Federal agencies are required to provide meaningful opportunities for public participation in the decision-making process. These opportunities are based on the nature and scale of the action, but the federal agency must ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made. Opportunities will be provided for the public to be involved in the identification of social, economic, and environmental impacts during the project development. In general the following actions trigger public involvement under the NEPA process; construction of a highway on a new or offset alignment, capacity increase due to construction of additional lanes, access change due to permanent modification of an existing highway interchange or construction of a new interchange, change in limits of access, or projects with a large number of relocations. Some projects may require multiple meetings due to public controversy, including but not limited to, road closure. Public involvement for NEPA quite often meets the public involvement required as part of Section 4(f) or Section 106. Although additional public involvement prior to right-of-way submittal at the request of Field Districts are captured in the NEPA document, they are not needed as part of NEPA requirement.

2.3 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

Significant cultural resources and historic properties are a vital and important component of our nation’s heritage. In 1966, Congress made it a national policy to encourage the preservation of

significant cultural resources. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider effects of their undertakings on historic properties, including places of traditional cultural or religious significance to tribes. The process for complying with Section 106, codified in 36 CFR 800, outlines specific requirements for involving the public in the agency's decisions. ODOT, as FHWA's delegate under Section 106, is responsible for ensuring that public involvement efforts under Section 106 are consistent with FHWA's needs.

The Federal agency is required to involve consulting parties in making findings through the Section 106 process. The Section 106 regulations specify the entities that are entitled to be consulting parties. By-right consulting parties consist of the applicable SHPO or THPO, Native American Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations, representatives of local governments with a jurisdiction over areas that may be affected by the project, and applicants for federal assistance, licenses, or approvals. Other consulting parties consist of those entities who may have a demonstrated interest in the undertaking, and, a demonstrated interest in a historic property that may be affected by the undertaking. It may be necessary to consult with the SHPO/THPO to identify consulting parties with an interest in the undertaking.

Public involvement may be required when adverse effects are anticipated to a historic property. Adverse effects can range from changes in the natural environment that is visible from one or more viewing points due to close proximity of a proposed transportation project, to a possible total acquisition of the property where it might be damaged or demolished as a result of the proposed project (undertaking or action). Public involvement provides an opportunity for the federal agency and its applicant to consult with interested parties who may have a stake in the outcome of the project or have a particular interest in historic properties that may be affected. Public involvement under the Section 106 process can be completed through correspondences, phone calls, or even website postings. The manner and technique used to consult with the public is dependent upon the significance of the historic property and the scale of the project. Public involvement for more significant properties is typically completed through small meetings with consulting parties throughout the project planning and development process. Federal agencies and their applicants are required to provide consulting parties an opportunity to provide input on the project. Section 106 public involvement is considered *ongoing* and is not tied to a time limit, but is initiated early in the project planning, so that a broad range of alternatives may be considered.

Public involvement requirements under Section 106 can often be satisfied through efforts defined and executed through the NEPA process, however Federal agencies are expected to tailor public involvement for historic properties to be proportionate to the nature and complexity of the undertaking. A project that does not have the potential to affect historic properties would not require specific Section 106 public involvement. When effects to historic properties are expected or anticipated, or there is a potential for public controversy due to potential effects to historic properties, it is necessary to identify consulting party candidates early in the process and provide for additional public involvement efforts outside that which may be completed under NEPA. The goals of engaging consulting parties early are to ensure that the interests of this particular subset of stakeholders are incorporated into our transportation decisions.

2.4 Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act

Section 4(f) provides for the consideration of park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and significance historic sites. The law applies only to USDOT agencies and prohibits these agencies from “using” land from these resources unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of these lands.

In August 2005, a provision implemented in SAFETEA-LU amended existing Section 4(f) legislation. The amendment simplified the process and approval for projects that have only de minimis impacts on lands subject to protection under Section 4(f). De minimis impacts are of such a minor extent they do not require a full Section 4(f) evaluation. Specifically, an analysis of avoidance alternatives is not required. This provision also made requirements for public involvement for actions that have de minimis impacts.

For parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges, the public must be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the effects of the project on the protected activities, features, and attributes of the resource. For historic sites, if the public involvement efforts required through the Section 106 process have been satisfied and the consultation has resulted in a “no adverse effect” or “no historic properties affected”, with concurrence of the SHPO or THPO, and the comments of the consulting parties have been considered, then public notice and comment, beyond that required by 36 CFR 800 is required.

In most cases, the public involvement efforts afforded through the NEPA and Section 106 processes will satisfy the public involvement component of de minimis impacts under Section 4(f). Projects that do not require public review and comment under NEPA are required to undergo a public review and comment period for a de minimis impact determination under Section 4(f).

2.5 Title VI

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and related acts and authorities, protects people from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. For public meetings, hearing, open houses, etc. ODOT will provide a sign in sheet for the public that includes a voluntary request for demographic data as required under Title VI. That information is then forwarded to the Title VI Coordinator for collection and analysis. For more information on the ODOT’s Title VI program please go to our website at https://www.ok.gov/odot/Doing_Business/Civil_Rights/Title_VI_Information.html for more information, as well as our complaint process and forms.

2.6 Environmental Justice (EJ)

Environmental Justice is based on Executive Order 12898. The purpose of Environmental Justice is to focus attention on the environmental and human health effects of government actions on minority and low-income populations with the goal of achieving environmental protection for all communities.

Gathering data regarding an affected community is a critical part of determining potential impacts of a project. Data can be gathered online from a variety of resources. A more hands-on method

is to perform a windshield or walking survey. This involves systematic observations made from a moving vehicle or on foot. Either or both can provide useful information regarding the community in general, as well as discovering specific facets of the community that may not be discovered by other means.

ODOT has a set of EJ procedures that includes community impact assessments to ensure fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

2.7 Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Executive Order 13166 ensures that persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency should have equal opportunity to participate in the transportation planning and decision-making process. The Executive Order requires Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with LEP, and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. It is important to balance four factors when determining if additional communication needs to be implemented; they include; the number or proportion of LEP persons in the affected area, the frequency with which LEP individuals will come in contact with area, the nature and importance of the service provided to people's lives, and the resources available to the recipient of federal funds. LEP services must be provided at no cost to the recipient and may include, but are not limited to, having vital documents translated into languages other than English and offering interpretive services or oral interpretation through translators.

2.8 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Accessibility is a critical factor to public involvement and is considered in the selection of a venue. Documents that advertise any type of public meeting should include a disclaimer that requires a 72-hour notice for those needing accommodations. The Public Meeting Accessibility Notice and Non-Discrimination Disclaimer are both included on the last page of this document. The ODOT Civil Rights Division will be responsible for working with the Public Involvement Officer to ensure that requests for accommodations under the ADA are handled appropriately.

ODOT is committed to inclusive public involvement and planning processes which are compliant with ADA and provide for meaningful participation by individuals without regard to their abilities. For more information regarding the ODOT's ADA program you can go to our website here [https://www.ok.gov/odot/Doing_Business/Civil_Rights/The_Americans_with_Disabilities_Act_\(ADA\)_Program:_Information.html](https://www.ok.gov/odot/Doing_Business/Civil_Rights/The_Americans_with_Disabilities_Act_(ADA)_Program:_Information.html) which also includes links to complaint processes and forms.

3.0 Tools and Activities for Public Involvement and Community Outreach

Public involvement and community outreach are an essential component of the development and implementation of transportation plans and projects. They are an important ongoing aspect of the planning and decision-making process that educates, emboldens, solicits, and affords the

public opportunity to become fully informed about transportation issues and project development. This helps to ensure that decisions are made in consideration of and to benefit the public's needs and preferences. Exceptional public involvement and community outreach includes determining the appropriate mechanisms, activities, and techniques to distribute information in a timely manner and to establish a means of conversation with stakeholders, the public, and all interested parties. The nature and extent of public involvement and community outreach will vary according to the type, complexity, and level of public concern with respect to the proposed project. Described below are some examples of public involvement and community outreach tools and activities intended to provide ideas and guidance as public involvement efforts and plans are developed for individual transportation projects.

3.1 ODOT Website

Websites are an excellent tool to provide interested public parties with information, announcements, documents, and opportunities for input. ODOT's public meeting website contains information such as where and when a public event is being held, the purpose and description of the plan or project, documents, such as comment forms, flyers, presentations, and contact information. ODOT regularly updates the public meetings website and new meetings are placed on the website two weeks prior to the date of the scheduled face to face public meetings. The ODOT website (www.odot.org) is also a good location to find project updates and scheduled public meetings.

3.2 Direct Mail

A variety of direct mailings may be used for public involvement. This approach is a targeted way to reach stakeholders and affected parties with detailed information. Mailing lists are updated regularly to include active interest groups, local and tribal officials, stakeholders, affected parties, and those who have previously indicated interest in the plan or project.

Letters, postcards, or pamphlets may be personalized with information specific to groups or landowners. Mailings may detail proposed studies, upcoming projects, road closures, or legal notices. Postal communication may contain, but is not limited to, short background of the project, information regarding upcoming meeting/open house/hearing, a location map or other related project material, and a contact person(s) for further information.

3.3 Canvassing in Project Areas

Canvassing is utilized to reach a larger group of affected people in a project area. Flyers can be handed out door-to-door to homes, local churches, grocery stores, community centers, public or private schools, etc. ODOT will also reach out to advocacy groups within the community, not only to provide information, but also to learn more about the unique needs of the area. Some of the material included on flyer is a project summary and purpose, information regarding upcoming meeting/open house, a small location map, and a contact person(s) for further information.

3.4 Visualization

Visualizations are any approach to creating images, diagrams, or animations to communicate a message. These aids are a tool used to inform the public of proposed projects and educate them on the impacts and features associated with the project. They can range from 3D models, large format maps, and animations to pre-recorded presentations with transcription. These tools can be utilized for traditional public meetings, open houses, virtual public involvement, or as educational tools for the community.

3.5 Public Notice

A number of state and federal regulations often include the requirement for posting public notice. ODOT routinely publishes public notices on its Public Meeting webpage and works in conjunction with appropriate parties for public notice postings. Public notices require a description of the project and a contact person for more information.

3.6 Media Releases

An official notice distributed through ODOT's Media and Public Relations (MPR) office to local media in a community is an effective way to disseminate plan, project information, or public involvement events to a large audience. Prior to a public meeting, information and/or meeting details are sent to local news affiliates within the affected area.

3.7 Social Media

Social media is another effective way to distribute information to a large audience, reaching an extensive range of demographics more quickly than traditional methods. Prior to a face-to-face public meeting or during a virtual public involvement comment period, information and meeting details are posted to ODOT social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

3.8 Stakeholder Meeting

Stakeholder meetings are often held prior to a public meeting to gain insight from a smaller group of property and/or business owners located adjacent to a proposed project. Stakeholders may have a demonstrated investment, share, or interest in the project. Stakeholders can share information with and draw feedback from their peer communities, serve as liaisons between those communities and ODOT, and work collaboratively with sometimes conflicting interests to develop recommendations that are acceptable. The format and manner of a meeting may be tailored to suit the stakeholder group.

When a project contains a historic property, Consulting Parties are identified as part of compliance with the NHPA and consist of a subset of stakeholders that may have an interest or expertise in a particular historic resource. The NHPA identifies two types of consulting parties: By-Right Consulting Parties (i.e., tribes, SHPO, THPO, etc.) and Other Consulting Parties (i.e., local historical society, community organizations, individual property owners, etc.). Consulting Party

meetings can be held at any time throughout the NEPA process and are coordinated so as to gain input in order to identify and avoid adverse effects to historic properties.

3.9 Public Meeting Types

The term “public meeting” includes an array of meeting formats and are held to exchange information and provide an opportunity for public input in project planning, location, need for design alternatives to, and possible impacts of, a proposed project, and potential mitigation. One or more public meetings should be held for projects which require significant amounts of residential or commercial relocations, substantially changes the layout or functions of connecting roadways or of the transportation facility being improved (i.e., alignment or access change), has a substantial adverse impact on abutting property where the facility is being widened to add more travel lanes to carry more traffic, otherwise has a significant social, economic, environmental or other effect. The type of meeting required may be determined by the significance of the project and level of documentation required.

As part of the planning and decision-making process ODOT often asks for the public to send in comments, feedback, or questions. For events where comment forms are made available, they are logged and responded to by ODOT either directly or through a meeting summary posted on the related meeting web page. Comment forms are made available in hard copy form or online and may be submitted in person at the public meeting, by mail (self-addressed stamped envelopes are available at public meetings), or online at the meeting web page.

Actions for organizing and implementing a public meeting are as follows:

1. Determine the purpose of the meeting, audience, appropriate format, and time
2. Select an appropriate meeting location and facility
3. Review outreach and solicitation lists, letters, flyers, handouts, presentation, and display boards at pre-meeting
4. Provide appropriate and timely notification of the meeting
5. Designate appropriate staff and consultant representation for the meeting
6. Brief staff and consultants thoroughly and rehearse for meeting at pre-meeting
7. Make audio and visual equipment arrangements if necessary
8. Use innovative public involvement techniques when appropriate
9. Determine ways to communicate with potential LEP populations, if necessary
10. Communicate effectively during the meeting
11. Offer a reasonable amount of time for public comment and adhere to requirements in 23 CFR 771.119 d, e, f, and h
12. Compose and upload a summary of the public meeting (virtual or otherwise) to the associated webpage after the event

3.9.1 Traditional Public Meeting

This format consists of an agency presentation, followed by a discussion period with the audience, then one-on-one time with the public afterwards. The traditional public meeting is a more formal, but effective way to present and gather information. They can be especially helpful in disseminating large amounts of data to large, diverse audiences. Traditional public

meetings are commonly used when introducing a project, presenting alternative alignments or designs, or when potential social, environmental, and economic impacts need to be discussed. Comment forms will be made available for the public to submit written comments.

3.9.2 Public Open House

The open-house format has become increasingly popular for meeting with the public on a one-on-one basis. This type of meeting is less formal and allows participants to come and go at their convenience. Customarily, an array of exhibits are displayed around the meeting room, and district and/or project staff are stationed at the various displays to answer questions. This format allows people to express their thoughts regarding a project without having to stand up in front of a crowd. The public is encouraged to read the meeting handout, review displays, ask questions, and submit comments in writing. Comment forms will be made available for the public to submit written comments.

3.9.3 Virtual Public Engagement

Virtual public engagement is outreach that is conducted online, in which members of the public participate via the internet. This format may be used in-lieu of face-to-face if approval is first received from the local FHWA division. When conducting virtual public engagement, it is vital to utilize multiple means of notifying the affected public and develop and implement strategies to address the underserved and LEP populations where identified in the project area. Additionally, a notice of the virtual public event must also include the following: clear instructions about how to log onto the virtual event, an explanation of how the virtual event will be conducted, a statement that members of the public may, as an alternative to logging-on to the virtual public meeting, call or email district or project staff to ask questions about the project, access project materials, and submit public comments. Strategies for communicating with LEP populations during the virtual public engagement must be developed, including providing interpreters if needed. A summary of the virtual public engagement will be prepared and posted on the meeting website.

3.10 Public Hearing

Public hearings are required for certain types of projects and if FHWA and/or ODOT determine one to be beneficial. They are held to formally obtain input from interested parties for the public record. Hearings are overseen by a moderator and there is no question-and-answer period. Hearings have a structured format but often include a presentation followed by an opportunity for the public to comment on the project/proposed action. Comments for public hearings are recorded by a stenographer at the hearing when individuals speak during the comment period. Comments for public record are also collected during an announced comment period through means such as the internet or by mail. A transcript of the hearing that includes the public's comments is completed and entered into public record.

If a public hearing is not required, ODOT may elect to offer the public an opportunity to request a public hearing. A Notice Affording Opportunity for Public Hearing (NAOPH) may be posted after a project is approved for further processing by FHWA (for federally funded projects) or by the Environmental Programs Division (for state-funded projects) to determine if any interested

citizens desire ODOT to hold a public hearing for a proposed project. A NAOPH informs the public that a hearing may be held upon request for a project and is not exclusively limited to its use for NEPA documentation.

3.11 Pop-Up Booth

Pop-Up Booths are events that can allow the exchange of transportation ideas and information within a neighborhood or community. They can also provide the public more candid conversations with ODOT staff about specific projects or local transportation issues and offer ODOT the opportunity to conduct public surveys. A centrally located spot in an affected area makes it convenient and easy for people to stop in and learn about a program or plan and to express their concerns and issues. It is important that a drop-in center is visible, accessible, and readily available to the community within a project area or corridor. Being open during specific, posted hours is essential for involving the public as pop-up booths are usually only available for a specified period of time. Times and locations of pop-up booths will be in consideration of the community to maximize participation from affected people. These centers are typically staffed by planning, project, and/or liaison personnel who are knowledgeable about the area, the project, and the issues.

3.12 Workshop

Workshops are intended to engage the public about a specific topic or action by means of interactive activities that can lead to the development of ideas and input regarding the needs, interests, and concerns of stakeholders. These task-oriented meetings typically involve relatively small groups (between 20–40 people) of interested or impacted members of the public and address aspects of a definitively defined topic with experts that can include traffic engineers, environmental specialists, and project designers. Workshops may last anywhere from two hours to an entire day, depending on the issue and group gathered. Activities selected for a workshop should be determined by the demographics of the group and what kinds of feedback the staff hopes to elicit. When used early in the planning and decision-making process, workshops can provide useful ideas and perspectives from concerned interest groups, conducted mid-process, they can help resolve contingent issues, and late in the process, may be useful in resolving a stalemate between groups.

3.13 Kiosk

A Kiosk is an electronic information station and looks similar to an automatic teller machine that has the ability to present a large amount of information using a computer and touch screen, keyboard, mouse, or trackball for navigation. Software used to show interactive video displays and stores information on hardware that allows retrieval of specific information based on directions from the user. Kiosks are tools that can be used to distribute key information and/or issue public surveys at locations where audiences tend to congregate. Sporting events, community fairs, or other local events are favorable locations for the set-up of kiosks. ODOT will ensure that these tools are ADA accessible and respond to any request for accommodation.

3.14 Additional Virtual Public Involvement

Virtual public involvement is the use of digital technology to engage individuals or to visualize projects and plans. Virtual public involvement supports the agencies' efforts to engage the public more effectively by supplementing face-to-face information sharing with technology. There are numerous virtual tools available that can assist in informing, educating, increasing participation, and broadening demographics when seeking input from the public. Some of these tools include, but are not limited to, mobile applications, project visualizations, do-it-yourself videos, crowdsourcing tools, virtual town halls, mapping tools, all-in-one tools, and digital tools to enhance in-person events. Virtual public involvement provides a platform of innovative tools and strategies for making public involvement more accessible resulting in a better understanding of the public's concerns regarding transportation system performance and needs. ODOT currently utilizes the all-in-one tool, MetroQuest, to help educate the public and receive feedback via online surveys and intends to implement more virtual public involvement tools in the future.

3.15 Actions that Prompt Public Meetings

ODOT's public participation seeks and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a transportation decision and can be held at various stages in project development process. While much of this interaction may occur during the environmental and design process, the continuation of such public involvement activities may be necessary during the construction phase of the project, dependent upon the specifics of the project. For more in-depth descriptions of these prompts, see Appendix A.

One or more public involvement opportunities **shall** be held by ODOT for any federal aid project that involves:

- Long Range Transportation Planning (LRTP) (25 years in the future)
- Permanently moving the current roadway to a new location
- An increase of traffic along a corridor due to the addition of more driving lanes
- Access or Travel Pattern Change (entrances and/or exits to highway or interstate changes or major intersection modifications) due to:
 - Permanent modification of an existing highway interchange including diverging diamonds, Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI), etc.
 - Construction of a new interchange on a highway
 - Introduction of roundabouts to areas unfamiliar with the concept, J turns in areas where through traffic dependent business may be affected,
- Permanent closure of a road
- Removal of roads from the state highway system

The following are circumstances that **may** prompt public involvement opportunities:

- Noise impacts
- Large number residential or commercial displacements
- Section 4(f)

- Section 106
- Field District determines need for public involvement
 - Prior to right-of-way submission
 - Significant design updates
 - Construction communication meetings prior to contractor work commencing
- Planning process / preliminary engineering transportation corridor studies

4.0 Additional Planning and Coordination

4.1 Tribal Coordination

As part of the Section 106 process described above, ODOT consults Native American Tribes and Nations regarding the potential effects that our undertakings may have on resources of importance to the community. While ODOT regularly consults with tribes on our undertakings, FHWA retains the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the sufficiency of ODOT’s tribal consultation efforts. Tribes and Nations are notified of the location of ODOT’s undertaking prior to any ground-disturbing activity, including environmental field studies. Tribes and Nations are consulted very early in the project development process; ODOT consults on state projects approximately five to seven years prior to construction and on local projects, an average of two years prior to construction. Tribal input at this phase is incredibly important but is only one component of ODOT’s tribal coordination efforts.

Additionally, ODOT reviews project locations to determine if the proposed project may affect a high number of tribal landowners, tribal offices, or other community resources. When such properties are directly affected by our projects, ODOT may conduct a tribal stakeholder meeting so as to involve the community in the process.

ODOT also regularly coordinates planning activities with tribal governments. ODOT’s Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan encompasses the Tribal Transportation Improvements Plans (or TTIPs). Tribal governments in Oklahoma are eligible to receive funding from either from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Transportation Program or the FHWA’s Federal Lands Highway program. In order to expend these funds, tribes must establish a TTIP, a list of priority projects. To date, Oklahoma’s tribes have partnered with ODOT on almost \$200 million of transportation projects. ODOT also reaches out to tribal governments so as to incorporate tribal priorities into the state’s LRTP. Tribal members previously served on advisory committees for the LRTP and are directly contacted to provide feedback on the LRTP.

Finally, ODOT has a Tribal Advisory Board (TAB). Within the formal structure of the TAB, tribes can provide direct input to ODOT’s senior management on ODOT’s policies, procedures, and plans. The TAB meets quarterly.

4.2 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The primary purpose of the LRTP is to provide strategic direction for the development of the Oklahoma multimodal transportation system. The federally required plan establishes transportation policies and priorities for the next 25 years for various modes of travel and

commercial freight movement in the state including highway, passenger and freight rail, public transit, active transportation, ports and waterways, and airport access. The LRTP includes the metropolitan area long range transportation plans which are known as Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTPs). The first LRTP was prepared in 1995 and provided a vision of the statewide transportation system through the year 2020. The plan has been updated several times since then to ensure that the Department complies with new Federal requirements and incorporate comments and concerns regarding the state's transportation system.

The 2045 LRTP avoids duplicating the transit plans' effort by reviewing services administered by ODOT before the 2019 legislation, evaluating existing LRTP policies for use in concert with the Oklahoma Public Transit Policy Plan (OPTPP), and relying on the findings of the OPTPP for specific future policies and strategies.

Public Participation and outreach for the LRTP should be fulfilled to the maximum extent practicable alongside consultation with non-metropolitan elected officials and organizations. This may include, activities such as public meetings, virtual public involvement, notification in newspapers, use of a Notice of Availability (NOA), and/or inclusion on the ODOT website.

4.3 Oklahoma Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The STIP is a financially constrained program which identifies priority and regionally significant transportation projects based on extensive planning. These are projects in which full funding is reasonably anticipated to be available to implement during the next four (4) years. This is not a final schedule of projects but is a "best estimate" at the time of STIP development. Only the projects in the first year of an approved STIP constitute an "agreed to" list for subsequent scheduling and implementation. The STIP serves as a short-range planning tool which educates the public on future transportation needs and assures that federal funds are spent on projects consistent with approved long-range plans. The State develops a new STIP biennially in direct relationship to the currently approved 8 Year Construction Work Plan. It is revised through a series of amendments which may be necessary due to a variety of factors, such as funding changes, project scope changes, or even a requested change in priority. Federal transportation law requires that projects be listed on the STIP in order to be eligible to receive federal funding. All proposed federally funded projects must be included in the STIP to receive authorization of funds by both the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The STIP includes the metropolitan area Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) and all tribal TIPs by reference. STIPs and TIPs have a separate set of public involvement procedures.

4.4 Non-Metropolitan Areas

Regulations require ODOT to provide for non-metropolitan local official participation and consultation in the development of the LRTP and the STIP, and to develop a documented process for consulting with non-metropolitan local officials that is separate from the Public Involvement Plan. ODOT provides opportunities for non-metropolitan participation in the development of the LRTP and STIP as discussed in the "Public Involvement Methods and Processes for Non-metropolitan Area Local Officials" section on the ODOT website. ODOT has consulted with the metropolitan planning agencies during updates of the LRTP and STIP and will continue to do so.

4.5 Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

In 1962, the United States Congress passed legislation that mandated urban transportation planning as a condition for receiving federal transportation funding in any Urbanized Area (UZA) with a population greater than 50,000. The 1962 Federal Aid Highway Act, along with federal initiatives in the 1970s which established the MPO, formed the basis for metropolitan transportation planning used in the present day.

ODOT is the governor's designee to administer the transportation planning process for each of the states MPOs. The MPO is the transportation policymaking organization made up of elected representatives from local government and transportation authorities. This group is responsible for all transportation planning activities in their urbanized area. MPOs were developed to ensure that existing and future Federal-aid expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3-C) transportation planning process. Any highway or transit project or program to be constructed or conducted within the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and to be paid for with federal funds, must receive approval by the MPO as being a product of the 3-C transportation planning process before any federal funds can be expended. ODOT currently coordinates planning efforts with four MPOs: Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG), Lawton Metropolitan Planning Organization (LMPO), Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization (Frontier, Fort Smith, AR).

4.6 Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

FTA provides financial and technical assistance to local public transit systems, including buses, subways, light rail, commuter rail, trolleys, and ferries. It also oversees safety measures and helps develop next-generation technology research. Transit services supported by FTA span many groups and provide wide-ranging benefits. Since 1964, FTA has partnered with state and local governments to create and enhance public transportation systems, investing more than \$12 billion annually to support and expand public rail, bus, trolley, ferry and other transit services. That investment has helped modernize public transportation and extended service into small cities and rural communities that previously lacked transit options.

In April 2019, Oklahoma's House Bill 1365 created ODOT's Office of Mobility and Public Transit (OMPT) and transferred all current duties and oversight responsibilities of the previous ODOT Transit Programs Division and the 5310 Program for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities to the new office. The OMPT is the governor's designee for receiving and administering funds for FTA's Sections:

- 5311: Formula Grants for Rural Areas
- 5339: Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program
- 5303: Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program
- 5309: Capital Investment Grants
- 5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities
- 5329: State Safety Oversight Program

OMPT's responsibilities under these programs includes but are not limited to; planning, programming, policy development, funding allocation/distribution, transit Subrecipient monitoring, technical assistance, and the accounting/reporting of all these Federal transportation assistance program funds. OMPT is also responsible for the development and certification of FTA Transit Asset Management (TAMP) Plan, Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP), State Management Plans (SMP) for Transit Bus Programs and Programs Standards for transit fixed guideway systems not regulated by the Federal Rail Administration (FRA).

Public Participation and outreach for the OMPT should be fulfilled to the maximum extent practicable alongside consultation with non-metropolitan elected officials and organizations. This may include, activities such as public meetings, virtual public involvement, notification in newspapers, use of a Notice of Availability (NOA), and/or inclusion on the ODOT website.

Appendix A: Actions that Prompt Public Involvement

As referenced in Section 3.15, more in-depth descriptions are provided below.

One or more public involvement opportunities **shall** be provided by ODOT for any federal aid project that involves:

- Long Range Transportation Planning (LRTP) 25 years in the future (Regulatory citation regarding interested parties, public involvement, and consultation found in 23 CFR 450.210)
 - The LRTP looks for the input of the public to help plan for the future infrastructure of the state. This outreach contributes to reducing or eliminating delay, duplicative processes, and conflict by considering various ideas, reducing misunderstandings, and avoiding and resolving conflicts before final decisions have been made. Communities being impacted have an insight to their infrastructures that transportation agencies may not have. So, engaging and involving the public early and often contributes to a well-planned and well-implemented transportation system.
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The following actions require public involvement. These actions fall into categories of EIS, EA, or Documented CE (DCE) as they are not specifically listed in 23 CFR part 771.117(c) and (d). DCE actions require pre-approval from FHWA with a DCE Justification form before review of the DCE. The eligibility for DCE cannot be made until all environmental studies, agency coordination, and public involvement under 23 CFR 77.111(h) completed.
- Removal of roads from the state highway system
 - Road is being added to the county or city maintenance system and removed from the state highway system.
- Other Roadway modifications
 - Permanently moving the current roadway to a new location
 - Construction of a new highway
 - An increase of traffic along a corridor due to the addition of more driving lanes
 - Access or Travel Pattern Change (entrances and/or exits to highway or interstate changes or major intersection modifications) due to:
 - Permanent modification of an existing highway interchange such as addition of ramps, Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI), Diverging diamonds, etc.
 - Construction of a new interchange on a highway.

The following are circumstances that **should** prompt public involvement opportunities:

- The following actions can potentially cause disruption in established traffic patterns, and disruption in the economy of the community. These disruptions can have impacts to social, economic, and environmental concerns that FHWA and ODOT must consider in

determining the class of action. These are actions which normally would fall under a CE per 23 CFR 771.117 (a) and (b) but could be elevated to an EA as a result of public controversy or other substantial environmental concerns.

- Introduction of roundabouts to areas unfamiliar with the concept
- J turns in areas where through traffic dependent business may be affected
- Permanent closure of a road

The following are circumstances that **may** prompt public involvement opportunities:

- Noise impacts (ODOT Noise Policy C-201-3 Highway Noise Abatement 2011)
 - The predicted noise level of the proposed project substantially increases the existing noise environment and requires a noise barrier. All noise sensitive areas and any known noise abatement measures will be presented and discussed at public hearings and/or public meetings. The concerns of the community shall be a major consideration in reaching a decision on the abatement measures to be provided. After completion of barrier design, ODOT will meet again with the property owners and benefitted residents to present final details and to solicit the residents' final views and opinions. The decision on whether the noise abatement measure is desired or not desired will be based on the preference provided by 51 percent or more of the benefitted property owners and residents that respond to the solicitation.
- Large number residential or commercial displacements
 - The need for a public meeting must be determined by considering the context of the project location and the overall intensity of the impact. For example, the relocation of 20 homes in a large urban area with adequate replacement housing stock might not be considered significant, while the same number of relocations in a small rural community lacking adequate replacement housing in the immediate area might be considered significant. Generally, if adequate replacement housing is available in the local community, the relocations do not appear to disproportionately and adversely affect low income or minority populations as determined from available census or other data, and relocations do not result in the elimination of important community resources, businesses or facilities. Relocation impacts may be considered "non- significant."
- Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act (Regulatory citation regarding Official with Jurisdiction review and public review and comment 23 CFR 774.5)
 - Project requires the use of property from publicly owned public parks, public recreation areas, wildlife, and waterfowl refuges and public or privately owned historic sites and there is no feasible and prudent alternative to that use. Public meetings may be necessary to minimize harm to the property resulting from such a use as stated above.
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Regulatory citation regarding public participation in the Section 106 process and level of effort needed for public involvement 36 CFR 800.2(d) and 800.8)
 - Public meetings may be necessary when adverse effects are anticipated to a historic property that may be affected by the undertaking. While historic

properties may be known resources that have been identified prior to project planning, they may also be newly identified resources that are documented during environmental studies conducted for the project. Public involvement may be satisfied through the NEPA process, but it is important to consult with individuals and stakeholders who have a particular or unique interest in the historic properties that may be affected by the project.

- Field District determines need for public involvement
 - A District may request public input to help in reducing or eliminating delay, duplicative processes, and conflict by considering various ideas, reducing misunderstandings, and avoiding and resolving conflicts. This may be prior to submission right-of-way, to update the public of significant design changes resulting from prior public involvement, or in advance of contractor work commencing.
- Planning process / preliminary engineering transportation corridor studies
 - Engaging and involving the public early and often contributes to a well-planned and well-implemented transportation system.

Appendix B: Public Meeting Accessibility Notice

In accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) will not and does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in ODOT services, programs, activities, or employment practices. ODOT will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, upon request. To request an accommodation, please contact the ADA/504/508 Coordinator at 405-521-4140 or Oklahoma Relay at 1-800-722-0353, no later than 72 hours before any scheduled event.

Appendix C: Non-Discrimination Statement

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) ensures that no person or groups of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, retaliation or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all programs, services, or activities administered by ODOT, its recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors. To request an accommodation please contact the ADA Coordinator at 405-521-4140 or the Oklahoma Relay Service at 1-800-722-0353. If you have any ADA or Title VI questions email ODOT-ada-titlevi@odot.org.

Appendix D: Correspondence



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Oklahoma Division

February 1, 2022

5801 N Broadway Ext., Ste. 300
Oklahoma City, OK 73118
Phone: 405-254-3300
Fax: 405-254-3302
www.fhwa.dot.gov/okdiv

In Reply Refer To:
HDA-OK

Tim Gatz
Executive Director
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
200 NE 21st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Mr. Gatz:

This letter is in response to your correspondence dated September 7, 2021 regarding a request to approve the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Public Involvement Plan (PIP) (attached). Our Office has reviewed your request and in accordance with 23 USC 128, 23 CFR 771.111(h)(1) and 40 CFR Parts 1500 thru 1508, we hereby approve the PIP document.

Federal Highway Administration and ODOT began working on the PIP in 2018. Since this time, we have made numerous comments which have been incorporated in the draft PIP. We appreciate the cooperation and support ODOT has provided during the review. We highly encourage your Office to consider sharing the PIP with the public and allowing them the opportunity to review this document and provide comments.

If you have any questions or need addition information regarding this matter, please contact Ms. Karen D. Orton, Realty Officer/Environmental Program Manager at 405-254-3344, or via e-mail @ Karen.Orton@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

BASHARAT
SIDDIQI

Digitally signed by
BASHARAT SIDDIQI
Date: 2022.02.01
11:44:19 -06'00'

Basharat Siddiqi
Division Administrator

Attachment

cc: Dawn Sullivan, ODOT
Tim Tegeler, P.E., ODOT
Siv Sundaram, P.E. ODOT
Joe Brutsche, ODOT
Souzan Bahavar, P.E., FHWA

July 16, 2021

Mr. Basharat Siddiqi
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration, Oklahoma Division
5801 Broadway Extension Hwy # 300
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Dear Mr. Siddiqi:

Re: Oklahoma Department of Transportation Public Involvement Plan submittal for Federal Highway Administration review and execution

Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is pleased to provide a copy of their updated Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) review and execution in accordance with 23 CFR §450.210. The PIP features several components, including a discussion of federal regulations that incorporate or necessitate public involvement, tools that ODOT Central Office and Field Districts can use to effectively engage the public in transportation projects, and planning and coordination efforts that can be implemented to ensure public involvement opportunities are met. In addition, we have incorporated an appendix to the document that provides information on types of actions that prompt public involvement and public meetings.

ODOT's Environmental Programs Division began working on the document in 2018. Various drafts of the PIP were shared with ODOT Central Office Divisions and FHWA-Oklahoma Division. We received valuable comments on the drafts, which were integrated into the final document presented here.

Prior to March 2020, ODOT had not engaged in full Virtual Public Involvement (VPI). Meetings were typically held in-person, and at a venue that was most accessible to the local population. The COVID-19 pandemic afforded us the opportunity and necessity to fully integrate VPI into our public outreach, and that opportunity is reflected in this final document.

ODOT respectfully requests your review and approval of the PIP under 23 U.S.C. 128 and 40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Tim J Gatz
Executive Director

Attachment: Public Involvement Plan May 2021