

Public Participation Plan



Adopted 19 July 2007



**Harrisonburg / Rockingham County, Virginia
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

c/o Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

112 MacTanly Place

Staunton, VA 24401

540-885-5174

www.hrvampo.org

**Public Participation Plan
Harrisonburg / Rockingham MPO
19 July 2007**

This Plan is prepared on behalf of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) through a cooperative process involving the City of Harrisonburg, County of Rockingham, Town of Bridgewater, Town of Dayton and Town of Mt. Crawford, Virginia, Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration.

This Public Participation Plan is the second amendment to the original Public Involvement Plan (PIP) adopted by HRMPO on 20 April 2006. The first series of amendments to the PIP occurred on 21 September 2006. The second series of amendments to the PIP resulted in a wholesale reorganization of the document in order to make it compliant with SAFETEA-LU regulations. The PIP thus became the Public Participation Plan (PPP) on 19 July 2007.

The preparation of this work program was financially aided through grants from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and the five localities comprising the HRMPO. Administrative support and technical assistance was provided by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission.

HRMPO Public Participation Plan, (Staunton, VA: Harrisonburg Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, 19 July 2007).

Repository: Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, 112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, VA 24401. phone: 540.885.5174. e-mail: cspdc@cspdc.org

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The following membership rosters represent those serving at the time the PPP was adopted and is presented for information purposes only.

MPO Policy Board (PB)

Officers:

Chair - Charles R. Chenault, City of Harrisonburg
Vice Chair - Dr. Carol A. Scheppard, Town of Mt. Crawford
Secretary/Treasurer – A. Ray Griffin, Jr., Central Shenandoah PDC (*non-voting*)

Members:

Charles W. Ahrend, Rockingham County
William B. Kyger, Jr. – Rockingham County
Joseph S. Paxton, Rockingham County
Roger Baker, City of Harrisonburg
Ted Byrd, City of Harrisonburg
George W. Pace, City of Harrisonburg
Reggie Smith, City of Harrisonburg
Bob F. Holton, Town of Bridgewater
Rick L. Chandler, Town of Dayton
Garrett Moore, Virginia Department of Transportation
Ivan Rucker, Federal Highway Administration (*non-voting*)
Tony Cho, Federal Transit Administration (*non-voting*)
Chip Badger, Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transit (*non-voting*)
Stephen King, Rockingham County, (*non-voting*)
William Vaughn, Rockingham County, (*non-voting*)

MPO Technical Advisory Board (TAC)

Officers

Chair - Bill Blessing, City of Harrisonburg
Vice Chair – Rhonda Henderson, Rockingham County

Members:

William L. Vaughn, Rockingham County
Stephen King, Rockingham County
James D. Baker, City of Harrisonburg
Dan Rublee, City of Harrisonburg
Vicki Conley, City of Harrisonburg
Donovan Branche, City of Harrisonburg
Jeffrey J. Riddleberger, Town of Bridgewater
Shane D. Stevens, Town of Mt. Crawford
O. Wade Hill, Town of Dayton
Bob Ball, Virginia Department of Transportation
Don Komara, Virginia Department of Transportation
Chip Badger, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Ivan Rucker, Federal Highway Administration (*non-voting*)
Tony Cho, Federal Transit Administration (*non-voting*)

Harrisonburg—Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization

City of Harrisonburg • Rockingham County
Town of Bridgewater • Town of Dayton • Town of Mt. Crawford
MPO

A RESOLUTION OF THE HARRISONBURG / ROCKINGHAM METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION APPROVING THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

WHEREAS, public involvement and participation is an essential part of the metropolitan transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS, Title VI and other Federal regulations require an ongoing public involvement process that documents outreach to disadvantaged, low income and minority communities and other stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, this Public Participation Plan has been developed in consultation with representatives from agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPO that are affected by transportation, and stakeholders including but not limited to the traditionally underserved and disadvantaged and minority communities; generators and users of freight; representatives of users of public transportation, bikeways, greenways, etc.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board does hereby approve and adopt the Public Participation Plan on this, the 19th day of July 2007 and in so doing, repeals the Public Involvement Plan approved on 20 April 2006 as amended on 21 September 2006.

ATTEST:



Charles R. Chenault
Chairman
Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan
Planning Organization Policy Board



A. Ray Griffin, Jr.
Secretary—Treasurer
Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan
Planning Organization Policy Board

Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to provide a plan that provides a meaningful process that allows citizens, 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, low and moderate income persons, minority groups and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The HRMPO values and welcomes public participation in its transportation planning and program efforts, initiatives and decision making processes.

Section 2: Goals, Desired Outcomes and Measures

- 2.1 **The goals of the HRMPO** relative to the public participation process are as follows:
- 2.1.1 Provide adequate public notice for public review, input, participation and comment on key decisions regarding the Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Plan (UPWP), amendments to the Public Participation Plan (PPP), and transportation planning initiatives and programs of significance; and
 - 2.1.2 Utilize multiple means of public notice to ensure that transportation planning information reaches the broadest possible audience; and
 - 2.1.3 Conduct meetings at convenient times and accessible locations; and
 - 2.1.4 Seek out and consider 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; and
 - 2.1.5 Use technology to make planning documents understandable through use of visualization techniques where appropriate as a means to help describe transportation plans and the TIP; and
 - 2.1.6 Demonstrate explicit consideration and thoughtful response to public input received during the development of the CLRP and the TIP and other planning initiatives; and
 - 2.1.7 Periodically review the effectiveness of this plan and its procedures and strategies to ensure a full and open participation process; and
- 2.2 **The desired outcomes of the HRMPO** relative to the public participation process are as follows:

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- 2.2.1 An engaged and well informed citizenry and stakeholders that provides thoughtful and meaningful input and participation to the metropolitan planning process; and
- 2.2.2 A meaningful and effective partnership between citizens, stakeholders and the MPO Policy Board (MPOPB) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC); and
- 2.2.3 An effective CLRP and other transportation related plans and programs that addresses the needs and interests of the community.

2.3 **Performance measures to be used by HRMPO** in helping access its effectiveness in achieving its PPP goals and desired outcomes are as follows:

2.3.1 Product and Service Results:

- 2.3.1.1 Turnaround Time in Responding to Request for Information for Advertised Plans: MPO staff will respond to a request for information regarding plans advertised for public comment within three (3) working days of receiving a request.
- 2.3.1.2 Turnaround Time in Responding to Request for General Information: MPO staff will respond to a request for information within five (5) working days after such request has been made.
- 2.3.1.3 100% Percent Compliance Findings Resolved: Any compliance findings relative the PPP will be resolved in a timely fashion.

2.3.2 Stakeholder Satisfaction Results:

- 2.3.2.1 80% Satisfaction Rating for MPO Policy Board
- 2.3.2.2 80% Satisfaction Rating for MPO TAC
- 2.3.2.3 80% Satisfaction Rating for MPO Staff Professionalism and Courtesy

2.3.3 Employee Training Results:

- 2.3.3.1 Title VI Compliance Training: MPO employees will attend Title VI Compliance training on an annual basis.
- 2.3.3.2 SAFETEA-LU and other Compliance Training: MPO employees will attend 5 to 10 hours training per year on SAFETEA-LU and other regulatory Compliance training and education.

2.3.4 Organizational Effectiveness Results:

2.3.4.1 Key Plans Receive State and Federal Approval: All key transportation plans (CLRP, TIP, UPWP and PPP) will receive the appropriate State and Federal approvals.

2.3.5 Leadership Results

2.3.5.1 Ethical Behavior: The MPO Policy Board, TAC and Staff will perform their duties and responsibilities in a professional, ethical manner. The target is for zero ethical violations.

2.3.5.2 Regulatory Compliance: HRMPO will strive to achieve 100% compliance with Title VI and other Regulations governing the MPO.

2.3.5.3 Audit Findings: The MPO's target is to receive an unqualified audit opinion each and every year.

2.3.5.4 MPO Policy Board and TAC Training: Policy and TAC leadership will receive Title VI training on an annual basis.

Section 3.0: Opportunities for Participation

The HRMPO will take a proactive approach to providing an opportunity for the public and stakeholders to be involved early and with a continuing involvement in all phases of the transportation planning process. Section 4 outlines the various guidelines and methods that will be used to provide for meaningful public participation. HRMPO will operate in a manner consistent with Title VI Regulations

Section 3.1: Advisory Committees and Coordination with State and Local Agencies

3.1.1 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): The TAC is a permanent committee that is composed of technical, planning and/or managerial staff representatives from each of the participating agencies of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO. Subcommittees of the TAC may be utilized to study issue areas not requiring the full TAC participation.

- 3.1.2 Other Advisory Committees: Other Advisory Committees may be appointed by the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Policy Board as it deems appropriate.
- 3.1.3 The TAC and other MPO appointed Committee(s): These committees will also solicit input and recommendations from other citizen groups and interested stakeholders when reviewing various transportation plans and programs.
- 3.1.4 Coordination with Statewide Transportation Planning process. The VDOT Staunton District Civil Rights Manager and District Planner will and do work with the Committee(s) to provide information and offer assistance on various issues. HRMPO will actively coordinate and participate with the Commonwealth on the statewide transportation planning process as requested and as appropriate.
- 3.1.5 Coordination with State and Local Agencies. HRMPO will prepare its major transportation plans and programs, CLRP and TIP, in consultation with state and local agencies, including those responsible for land use regulation.

Section 4: Public Notice

Reasonable public notice shall be provided to the public as prescribed in the following subsections.

4.1 Notice of Public Participation Activities

Public notice shall be provided for all public participation activities. Public participation activities include:

- 4.1.1 MPO Policy Board meetings, both regular and special
- 4.1.2 TAC meetings, both regular and special
- 4.1.3 Any citizen advisory, ad-hoc or other formal committees that may be established by the Policy Board
- 4.1.4 Other meetings of the MPO Policy Board and/or TAC that are designed to solicit community comment and information on metropolitan transportation planning efforts and/or plans
- 4.1.5 Any approval of the CLRP, TIP, UPWP, PPP, or any other major programs and/or plans; and
- 4.1.6 Any amendment to the CLRP, TIP, PPP; and
- 4.1.7 Any substantive amendment to the UPWP and any other major programs and/or plans.

4.2 Public Notice Requirements for Meetings

- 4.2.1 Public Notification for Regularly Scheduled MPO Policy Board and/or TAC Meetings: In November, or the last regular meeting, of each year, a meeting schedule providing for the dates, time and location of meetings will be approved and published once in a local newspaper and posted continuously on the HRMPO web site.
- 4.2.2 Public Notification for Special Meetings of the MPO Policy Board and/or TAC: A notice advising the public of the date, time and location of the special meeting shall be published in a local newspaper and posted to the HRMPO web site not less than seven calendar days prior to the meeting.
- 4.2.3 Public Notification for Special Meetings held within the community for the purpose of presenting plans, gathering public input and participation shall be published in a local newspaper and posted to the HRMPO web site not less than fourteen days prior to the meeting.

4.3 Public Notice Requirements for Approval and/or Amendment of Plans

- 4.3.1 Approval of the Constrained Long Range Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Unified Planning Work Plan and other major plans shall be subject to public comment. A notice of such plan's consideration and solicitation of public comment and invitation to the meeting at which it will be considered for final adoption shall be published in a local newspaper and on the HRMPO web site for a period of not less than 21 calendar days.
- 4.3.2 Amendments to the Constrained Long Range Plan, Transportation Improvement Program and other major plans shall be subject to public comment. A notice of such plan's proposed amendment and solicitation of public comment and invitation to the meeting at which it will be considered for final adoption shall be published in a local newspaper and on the HRMPO web site for a period of not less than 21 calendar days.
- 4.3.3 Substantive amendments to the Unified Planning Work Plan that change the scope of work, i.e., adding or deleting work plans (but not programs de-programmed in order to be carried forward into the subsequent fiscal year) shall be subject to public comment. A notice of such plan's amendment and solicitation of public comment and invitation to the meeting at which it will be considered for final adoption shall be published in a local newspaper and on the HRMPO web site for a period of not less than 21 calendar days.
- 4.3.4 Approval of and/or amendments to the Public Participation Plan shall be done in consultation with the various interested citizens and representatives of interested parties as identified in Section 1 and shall be subject to public comment. A notice of the Public Participation Plan's proposed adoption and/or amendment and solicitation of public comment and invitation to the meeting at which it will be considered for final adoption

shall be published in a local newspaper and on the HRMPO web site for a period of not less than 45 calendar days.

4.4 Public Notice Requirements for Harrisonburg Public Transit System

4.4.1 The Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT) utilizes the HRMPO as the vehicle for its public participation process. To that end, the MPO will comply with transit planning requirements. Each public notice for HDPT will state that “public notice of public involvement activities and time established for the public review and comments on the TIP will satisfy the Program of Projects requirements.”

4.5 Public Notice Methodology for Adoption/Amendment of Plans & Special Meetings as Noted in Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4

4.5.1 Newspapers. Public notice as required in Section 4 shall be published in the non-legal section of the newspaper having the largest circulation within the MPO area, foreign language newspapers and other media sources as deemed appropriate to reach minority populations. Such notice shall state the date, time and location of the meetings and where information, plans, etc., about the meeting or plan to be considered can be reviewed.

4.5.2 HRMPO Web Site. All public notices shall be posted on the web site under the Public Notice tab. Such notice shall state the date, time and location of the meetings and where information, plans, etc., about the meeting or plan to be considered can be reviewed. If such information is available in a digital format, it shall be posted to the web site and linked to the public notice.

4.5.3 E-Mail/Direct Mail Notification. A list of interested persons, stakeholders and/or organizations that have requested to receive notification of meetings, copies of agendas, notice when key plans and decisions are to be made shall be maintained by the HRMPO staff. Notifications as required and articulated in Section 4 shall be sent to those on the notification list. Hard copies will not be sent if those on the list have e-mail.

4.5.4 Public Agencies. All interested and affected public agencies, State, Federal, regional and local, shall receive notification as required and articulated in Section 4. Hard copies will not be sent if these agencies have e-mail capability.

Section 5: Public Information and Education

HRMPO is committed to providing citizens, stakeholders and interested parties with access to its public records, plans, meetings and activities. It is also committed to helping educate the public about metropolitan transportation planning and how it can affect their lives and businesses by providing information.

5.1 Access to Information

HRMPO will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to technical and policy information relating to the data or content used in the development of transportation plans, programs and projects. Documents will be available for public inspection at the office of the MPO staff (Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission) located at 112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, Virginia during normal working hours. To the extent feasible, documents will be digitized and made available on the HRMPO website— www.hrvampo.org

Copies of draft plans and programs for public review will also be placed at the following locations:

- Rockingham County Department of Community Development, 20 East Gay Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802
- City of Harrisonburg Public Works Department, 320 East Mosby Road, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801
- City of Harrisonburg, City Manager's Office, City Hall, 345 S. Main St., Harrisonburg, Virginia
- Town of Bridgewater Town Office, 201 Green Street, Bridgewater, Virginia, 22812
- Town of Dayton Town Office, 125-B Eastview Street, Dayton, Virginia 22821
- Town of Mt. Crawford, available at Town of Bridgewater and Massanutten Regional Public Library.
- Massanutten Regional Public Library , 174 S. Main St., Harrisonburg, VA

5.2 Public Education and Information

- MPO Staff will perform routine maintenance and updating and posting of materials on the HRMPO website, www.hrvampo.org , to include but not be limited to: public notices for procurement, public comment, public meetings, policy documents of the HRMPO, meeting schedules, HRMPO events and activities calendar, major transportation plans including the CLRP, TIP, UPWP, PPP, etc., agendas and minutes of meetings for the Policy Board and TAC, etc.
- MPO Staff will compile an educational packet\brochure for distribution at public offices, agencies, libraries, and to post on the HRMPO website.
- HRMPO officials, staff and volunteers will make presentations as requested by citizen groups, public agencies, or local governmental bodies.
- HRMPO officials, staff and volunteers will attend public meetings sponsored by MPO member jurisdictions as deemed necessary and appropriate by those jurisdictions and their staff.
- HRMPO Staff will provide, as appropriate, public service announcements and interviews on radio and cable television local community channels to explain the subject matter and promote public participation.
- Articles and Press Releases will be provided to local media.
- HRMPO Staff/Officials will provide information presentations at regional sites, open houses, round tables, or other community forums as requested and/or appropriate.
- HRMPO Staff/Officials will provide formal presentations to various service clubs, civic and professional groups as requested.

- Mailings will be provided to select individuals, groups or organizations that have expressed interest or made comments at meetings.
- Information flyers will be distributed on public transit buses.

Section 6: Public Meetings

6.1 Location of Regular Meetings of MPO Policy Board/TAC

Regular meetings of the MPO Policy Board and TAC will be held at the Rockingham County Government Center or the City of Harrisonburg Fire and Rescue Building. These facilities are ADA and public transit accessible.

6.2 Location Public Information Meetings

Public information meetings will be held at various locations in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County area to inform the public of the planning process and to solicit ideas, input and feedback. Public hearings and public information meetings will be held at locations accessible to and at times convenient to minority and disabled residents. To the extent feasible, meeting locations held within the community will be ADA and public transportation accessible.

6.3 Public Comment Opportunity

All regular and special meetings of the MPO Policy Board and TAC, and any other MPO appointed committee, will provide a public comment period after the meeting is called to order and the minutes of the prior meeting have been approved. This comment period may be used by citizens to address their concerns, provide input, etc. to matters on the agenda or of a general nature as long as they relate to metropolitan transportation planning. Additionally, when major plans as articulated in Section 4 are placed on the agenda, public comment time shall be provided as part of the Board's or TAC's discussion of that item. Public comment may also be received about an item or items to be discussed at a meeting via e-mail, mail, etc. prior to the meeting. In these cases, copies shall be provided to the Board and/or TAC members and noted for the public record during the meeting. Explicit attention to and consideration of public comments will be given and responses, when appropriate, provided to questions asked.

6.4 Interpreters

Sign language and/or non-English language interpreters will be provided if needed and requested at least seven working days in advance of a regular and/or special scheduled meeting. Request should be made with the MPO Staff identified in the Contact Section of this Plan.

6.5.0: Response to Public Input

- 6.5.1 Responses to questions and comments from the public concerning the public participation process, draft transportation plans, programs, or public agency consultation process will be made directly to the individual by email, letter or telephone call or some other appropriate means.
- 6.5.2 When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft CLRP, TIP and UPWP as a result of the participation process outlined in the PPP or the interagency consultation process, a summary and analysis of the comments and a report on the disposition of the comments shall be made as part of the final CLRP and TIP.

Section 6.6: Approval of Major Plans

The Policy Board of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO will hold the final public hearing and/or meetings, as appropriate and required, on the transportation plans as noted above. After due consideration of all public comments received in writing and/or presented in person at the meeting/hearing, the Policy Board will deliberate upon all information that it has received and make a decision, via Resolution, on the transportation plan in question. However, an additional period of public comment will be provided to stakeholders if the final CLRP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by HRMO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts.

Section 7.0: Periodic Review and Amendment of PPP

HRMPO will review and consider revisions to its PPP on a bi-annual basis to ensure that it remains a dynamic and effective document. Review and amendment of the PPP will be done in consultation with various stakeholders as outlined in Section 1.

Section 8.0: Contact Information

Citizens, stakeholders and interested parties may contact the following individuals for information regarding this PPP, MPO documents, plans and other public records, submit oral and/or written comments about any advertised plan, submit oral and/or written comments about the MPO and its planning efforts to:

1. MPO Secretary/Treasurer—Administrator, 112 MacTanly Pl, Staunton, VA 24401, 540-885-5174, cspdc@cspdc.org
2. MPO Administrative Assistant, same address as above.

Detailed contact information is also provided for each member of the MPO Policy Board and TAC on the HRMPO website, Board and Committee tab.

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