

## Public Participation Plan Ad-hoc Committee Overview

The RVTPO Transportation Technical Committee convened an ad-hoc committee to develop a Public Participation Plan. The Transportation Technical Committee invited 82 agencies or individuals representing:

- RVTPO member jurisdictions and agencies
- Business interests
- Economic development
- Communications and marketing
- Environmental protection
- Environmental justice
- Transportation
- Freight
- Safety & emergency management
- Health
- Education
- Housing
- Transportation workers

Thirty-nine people from thirty agencies attended at least one of the six meetings between May 8 and October 23, 2017, and several others provided feedback. The committee:

- Reviewed public participation plans from eleven MPOs.
- Identified agencies and demographic groups missing from the table, and assisted staff in reaching out.
- Elected a chair and vice-chair.
- Learned about the transportation planning process and opportunities for public participation.
- Drafted public participation Purpose and Objectives.
- Provided feedback on survey questions to capture public input on the Purpose and Objectives.
- Brainstormed and discussed public participation tools with respect to the Purpose and Objectives.
- Provided feedback on the draft Plan and responded to feedback from the Transportation Technical Committee on the draft Plan.

Detailed meeting minutes are available on the RVARC website or by request (<http://rvarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Compiled-Minutes.pdf>).

The RVTPO thanks the many people who volunteered their time, skills, and energy to create this Plan.

*Public Participation Plan Ad-hoc Committee*

<i>Dee King, Chair</i>	<i>City of Salem citizen representative</i>
<i>Ben Bristol, Vice Chair</i>	<i>City of Roanoke citizen representative</i>
John Busher	Botetourt County citizen representative
Tim Martin	City of Roanoke business representative
alternate Melinda Mayo	
Bruce Mayer	Vinton business representative
Carl Palmer	Valley Metro
Kevin Jones	Federal Highway Administration
Olivia Byrd	Grandin Village Business Association
Wendy Jones	Williamson Road Area Business Association
Michael Shelton	Brambleton Area Business Association
Josh Baumgartner	Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce
Morgan Romeo	Western Virginia Workforce Development Board
Landon Howard	Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge
Amar Bhattarai	Refugee and Immigration Services
Bethany Lackey	Roanoke Refugee Partnership
Aaron Fallon	Total Action for Progress
Antwyne Calloway	Blue Ridge Independent Living Center
Michelle Via	Roanoke Area Visually Enabled
Kim Gembala	Roanoke Rescue Mission
Shawn Hunter	The Peacemakers, Inc.
Paul Workman	Blue Ridge Bicycle Club
Liz Belcher	Greenway Commission
Jeremy Holmes	Ride Solutions
alternate Tim Pohlrad-Thomas	
Robert Stutes	Uber
David Foster	Rail Solution
James Humanik	Fetch
Marci Stone	Roanoke City Emergency Manager
Aaron Boush	Carilion
alternates Sierra Steffan, Amy Michals	
Sean Pressman	Lewis Gale
Stacie Turner	Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare
Forest Jones	Salem Public Schools
alternate Lewis Armistead	
Crystal Hall	Roanoke Housing Authority
Wayne Leftwich	

**REGIONAL COMMISSION STAFF**

Rachel Ruhlen	Project Manager
Cristina D. Finch	
Dorian Allen	
Bryan Hill, AICP	

**Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee  
Minutes – May 8, 2017**

Present:

Landon Howard, Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge  
Ben Bristoll, Roanoke City citizen representative  
Josh Baumgartner, Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Bruce E. Mayer, Vinton business representative  
Dee King, Salem citizen representative  
David Foster, Rail Solution  
Kevin Jones, Federal Highway Administration  
Michelle Via, Roanoke Alliance for the Visually Enabled  
Amar Bhattarai, Refugee and Immigration Services  
Olivia Byrd, Grandin Village Business Association  
Aaron Fallon, Total Action for Progress  
Paul Workman, Blue Ridge Bicycle Club  
Liz Belcher, Greenway Commission  
Aaron Boush, Carilion  
Morgan Romeo, Western Virginia Workforce Development Board  
Crystal Hall, Roanoke Housing Authority

Staff:

Cristina Finch, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
Dorian Allen, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
Rachel Ruhlen, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

Others present:

Wayne Leftwich, City of Roanoke

**Background**

Organizational flow chart

- I. Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission
  - a. Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO)
    - i. Transportation Technical Committee
      1. Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee is to develop a new Public Participation Plan for the RVTPO. At a minimum, this plan describes public participation strategies for the *Long Range Transportation Plan* and the *Transportation Improvement Plan*.

*“A participation plan shall be developed in consultation with all interested parties and shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan.” – 23 U.S. Code § 134*

The current Public Participation Plan was adopted in 2007. Many of the activities described in that plan have been discontinued. Technology has changed, and the region has grown in population and area. The federal Certification review last year, which was overall positive, identified the Public Participation Plan as needing a major overhaul in light of these changes.

The federal review happens every 4 years because the population of the urbanized area now exceeds 200,000, categorizing the RVTPO as a Transportation Management Area. The following is the relevant recommendation from the TMA Certification Review report:

*Recommendation: The 2007 PPP\* is almost a decade old. While modifications were adopted in 2014 prior to the quadrennial certification, the Federal Team recommends completing a full update to bring the plan up-to-date. To this end, guidance and case studies to assist in this endeavor can be found on the Transportation Planning Capacity Building website:  
[https://www.planning.dot.gov/focus\\_publicEngage.asp](https://www.planning.dot.gov/focus_publicEngage.asp).*

*In particular, the following items are recommended for the next PPP update:*

*MPOs\* have a responsibility to actively involve all interested parties in the planning process and to have that process documented in a Public Participation Plan (PPP). Furthermore, part of the transition to being a TMA\* requires a more formalized process-orientated approach to help manage the system that goes beyond simply developing static plans. To this end, the Federal Team recommends the TPO\* develop methods to evaluate the effectiveness of their public involvement process and periodically evaluate the PPP. While TPO staff currently conducts ad hoc review and evaluation of its various public involvement activities, an in-depth approach to successful evaluation of the effectiveness PPP requires continuous tracking of each outreach tool. The TPO should begin to compile the data it has been collecting into a formalized tracking database or tool for consistency and transparency. This tracked data can then be used to formulate Public Participation Plan effectiveness goals, objectives, indicators, and targets to better gauge how public involvement strategies employed by the TPO are working, and achieving desired outcomes.*

*Objective 6.4 of the TPO's PPP requires an annual summary of public comments to be shared with local, State and Federal partners. The TPO should consider making these summaries available to the public or on the TPO website to instill transparency. Furthermore, the PPP also states that a summary of public comments are incorporated into the TIP; however, the Federal Team did not see this summary as part of the FY2015-2018 TIP document. Please include these comment summaries as indicated in the PPP or modify the wording of the plan.*

\*PPP = Public Participation Plan

\*TMA = Transportation Management Area

\*MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization (aka Transportation Planning Organization)

\*TPO = Transportation Planning Organization (aka Metropolitan Planning Organization)

Staff will provide the full TMA Certification Review Report to the committee before our next meeting.

Committee members commented that the value of having a plan is that it outlines how the public participation happens, instead of having it change as staff changes.

Timeline (tentative dates)

<b>Task</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Recruit agencies and interested citizens to serve on committee	April-May 2017	Staff
Review other agencies' Public Participation Plans	May 2017	PPPC
Identify missing partners, review our & other agencies' plans	May 8, 2017	PPPC
Finish review of plans Identify Public Input Needs	June 5, 2017	PPPC
Set Vision and Goals	June 19, 2017	PPPC
Get broader public input on Vision and Goals	June 26 – July 10, 2017	Public
Vision and Goals draft 2	July 17, 2017	PPPC
Review Vision and Goals with TTC	August 10, 2017	TTC
Brainstorm Objectives	August 17, 2017	PPPC
Set Objectives	August 28, 2017	PPPC
Review Objectives with TTC	September 14, 2017	TTC
Draft outline		Staff
Review outline	September 25, 2017	PPPC
Draft plan		Staff
Review plan	October 23, 2017	PPPC
Revise plan		Staff
Review plan with TTC	November 9, 2017	TTC
Revise plan		Staff
Seek Policy Board approval to share Draft 2 for public input	December 7, 2017	TPO
45-Day Public Comment Period	Dec 11 – Jan 25	Public
Revise plan		Staff
Review revised plan	January 22, 2018	PPPC
Review revised plan with TTC	February 8, 2018	TTC
Present final plan to Policy Board for adoption	February 22, 2018	TPO

PPPC = Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee

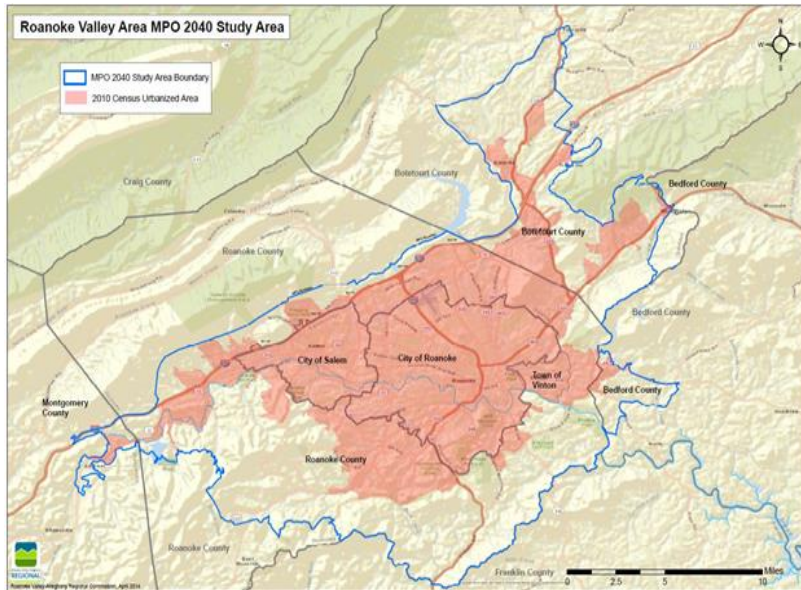
RVTPPO = Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization

TTC = Transportation Technical Committee

TPO = Transportation Policy Board

Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPPO)

The Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPPO) covers the urbanized area as well as the area predicted to be urbanized by the year 2040.



RVTPO members

**Locality members**

Roanoke City  
 Salem  
 Vinton  
 Roanoke County  
 Botetourt County  
 Bedford County  
 Montgomery County

**Non-locality members**

Valley Metro  
 Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport  
 Virginia Dept. of Transportation  
 Virginia Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation  
 Federal Highway Administration  
 Federal Transit Administration  
 Regional Commission

The Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration require each Transportation Planning Organization to develop certain plans, including:

- Long Range Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Plan
- Congestion Mitigation Process Plan
- Unified Planning Work Program
- Public Participation Plan
- Title VI Plan
- Limited English Proficiency Plan

## **Committee structure**

At our next meeting, we will elect a chair and a vice-chair. Anyone interested in these positions should contact Rachel Ruhlen ([rrehlen@rvarc.org](mailto:rrehlen@rvarc.org), (540) 343-4417).

### Responsibilities of Chair:

- Approve the agenda and facilitate the meeting
- Remind each person to state their name when speaking
- Keep the discussion on topic
- Ensure that no one person monopolizes the meeting
- Keep the meeting on time

### Responsibilities of Vice-Chair:

- Perform the duties of Chair in the absence of the Chair

### Responsibilities of Staff:

- Draft the agenda
- Schedule meetings
- Send reminders and notices to members

## Review plans

Committee members were asked to review our current public participation plan and 1-2 others (can be accessed at: <https://rvarc.sharefile.com/d-sc448868bdb74411b>). The committee discussed what elements of each plan may be worth emulating in our plan.

Roanoke – comprehensive, well organized. Covers all necessary bases. Written for staff, not suitable for the public. Tables in other plans were helpful for a longer plan & for a more readable plan. Needs more visualization, more user friendly. Why did we stop doing things that we were doing? Every plan but Roanoke's had appendix & acronym pages. We need to include definitions.

Tampa – good inclusiveness, casting a net. Translating our committee into true participation in the community. They did a good job.

Richmond – use social media. Public access TV to broadcast meetings, more modern approach might be Periscope or Facebook Live to broadcast meetings. Table with different target populations and strategies for those. Different venues, community settings (festivals) for community engagement.

MARC – changing technology. Update every 3 years. Federal Highway Administration considers it an exemplary plan.

Hampton Roads – promoted public participation to the public. Audience is the public, not just staff. Define the process. Techniques we will use for input. Defined different minorities. Greenway users difficult to categorize based on appearance. School outreach program section was unique.

Fredericksburg – frame participation plan in all the other federal required plans. Gave shape to everything. Speaker bureaus, going out to community groups.

Farmington – Big focus on website and keeping it up to date. Our website is difficult to navigate. They said they'd "think about" social media. Good matrix in appendix A, appendix D - places they post notices, avenue of where people can look for stuff.

Space Coast – outline, table of contents is logical. Get Involved flyer with contact info (2nd page). Matrix of all the plans, how often they are updated in which years.

A fundamental question was raised, Who is our audience? Is this plan for staff or is it for the public? The plan contains guidance for staff, but can also be a resource to the public who is interested in how we engage the public.



## **Missing people**

The committee discussed who else should be involved in public participation. First, we discussed if the categories of interests identified by staff and the Technical Committee were sufficient. Rachel Ruhlen suggested adding Safety as a category, and no one disagreed.

### Business

*Represented:* Grandin Village Business Assoc

*Suggested:* Williamson Road Area Business Association (suggested by Ben Bristoll)

### Economic Development

*Represented:*

Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce (Josh Baumgartner)

Western Virginia Workforce Development Board (Morgan Romeo)

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy District Organization (Eddie Wells)

*Suggested:*

Roanoke Regional Partnership (following up on a contact)

bigger business from business park on 460, such as Roanoke Centre for Industry & Technology (suggested by Liz Belcher)

Downtown Roanoke Inc (suggested by Ben Bristoll)

### Communications & Marketing

*Represented:* Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge (Catherine Fox, Landon Howard)

### Environmental Protection

*Represented:*

Dept. of Environmental Quality (Angela Howard)

Blue Ridge Land Conservancy (Meagan Cupka)

*Suggested:*

Appalachian Trail Conservancy (suggested by Aaron Boush)

Sierra Club (suggested by Ben Bristoll)

### Environmental Justice (aka Social Justice)

*Represented:*

United Way (Wendy Drewery)

Refugee & Immigration Services (Amar Bhattarai)

Roanoke Refugee Partnership (following up on a lead)

Total Action for Progress (Aaron Fallon)

Blue Ridge Independent Living Center (Antwyne Calloway)

Roanoke Area Visually Enabled (Michelle Via, Dianne Decker)

Roanoke Spanish (following up on a lead)

Virginia Dept. for the Blind and Vision Impaired (Morgan Romeo has a contact)

*Suggested:*

Local Office on Aging (suggested by Michelle Via)

Roanoke Rescue Mission (suggested by Ben Bristoll)

Kevin Jones mentioned social service buildings/ organizations, churches, a large church, and schools.

Someone with or representing those with mobility disabilities (Blue Ridge Independent Living Center?)

## Transportation

### *Represented:*

Blue Ridge Bicycle Club (Paul Workman)  
Greenways Commission (Liz Belcher)  
RIDE Solutions (Jeremy Holmes, Tim Pohlad-Thomas)  
Rail Solution (David Foster)

### *Suggested:*

Valley Metro user  
Paratransit user  
Airport user  
Botetourt County Senior and Accessible Van Service  
Taxi company  
Uber/Lyft driver (Ben Bristoll suggested Robert Stutes, the fun Uber driver)

David Foster commented that the most common transportation user, drivers of motor vehicles, is not formally represented. The majority of committee members are this type of transportation user, and there is no group we are aware of representing this type of transportation which is the default mode in most transportation planning. However, we need to make sure this mode doesn't get overlooked, perhaps by including it in the list. It was commented that RIDE Solutions is engaged in matching carpoolers.

## Freight

### *Represented:*

Norfolk Southern (Tim Bentley)

### *Suggested:*

Trucking company – AkzoNobel, a new Grandin Village Business Assoc member and a large business (suggested by Olivia Byrd)  
Xcel Trucking, contact is Russ Elliot (suggested by Liz Belcher)  
Virginia Western Foundation (suggested by Liz Belcher)  
Lawrence Transfer (suggested by Liz Belcher)  
Fed EX, UPS (suggested by David Foster)  
ABF (suggested by Kevin Jones)  
Fetch (suggested by Ben Bristoll)

## Emergency Management

### *Represented:*

Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Commission (Howard Hall, Ray Torres)

### *Suggested:*

Emergency Manager for Roanoke City, Marcie Stone (suggested by Paul Workman)

## Health

### *Represented:*

Carilion (Aaron Boush)

### *Suggested:*

Virginia Dept of Health (suggested by Aaron Boush)  
Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Care (suggested by Aaron Boush)

Lewis Gale (suggested by Dee King)

Education

*Suggested:*

Salem Public School (suggested by Dee King)

Jefferson College of Health Sciences (suggested by Aaron Boush)

Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine & Research Institute (suggested by Aaron Boush)

Roanoke college Liz Holbrook Ackly (suggested by Aaron Boush)

**Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee  
Minutes – June 5, 2017**

Present:

Dee King, Salem citizen representative  
Ben Bristoll, Roanoke City citizen representative  
Bruce E. Mayer, Vinton business representative  
Michelle Via, Roanoke Alliance for the Visually Enabled  
Amar Bhattarai, Refugee and Immigration Services  
Aaron Fallon, Total Action for Progress  
Paul Workman, Blue Ridge Bicycle Club  
Liz Belcher, Greenway Commission  
Morgan Romeo, Western Virginia Workforce Development Board  
Bethany Lackey, Roanoke Refugee Partnership  
Jeremy Holmes, RIDE Solutions  
Tim Pohlad-Thomas, RIDE Solutions  
Antwyne Calloway, Blue Ridge Independent Living Center  
James Humanik, Fetch  
Forest Jones, Salem Public Schools  
Stacie Turner, Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Care  
Kim Gembala, Roanoke Rescue Mission  
Robert Stutes, Uber  
Marc Stone, Roanoke City Emergency Manager  
Carl Palmer, Valley Metro  
Tim Martin, Roanoke City business representative  
Mike Shelton, Brambleton Area Business Association  
Sean Pressman, Lewis Gale

Staff:

Cristina Finch, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
Dorian Allen, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
Rachel Ruhlen, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

*Minutes.* Paul Workman moved to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2017 meeting; seconded by Jeremy Holmes. Motion passed.

*Officer Elections.* Dee King volunteered for Chair; Ben Bristoll volunteered for Vice-Chair. Liz Belcher moved to approve the slate of officer candidates; seconded by Morgan Romeo. Motion passed.

*Schedule.* There were no concerns with the timeline as presented.

## Timeline

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Recruit agencies and interested citizens to serve on committee	April-May 2017	Staff
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Identify missing partners, review our & other agencies' plans	May 8, 2017	PPPC
Finish review of plans Identify Public Input Needs	June 5, 2017	PPPC
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RVTPO = Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization

TTC = Transportation Technical Committee

TPO = Transportation Policy Board

*Website.* Staff set up a website for this committee for access to the timeline and any other materials and information. <http://rvarc.org/transportation/public-involvement/public-participation-plan-ad-hoc-committee/>

### **Review of plans requiring public input**

Federal laws mandate public input on the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Plan. Rachel Ruhlen reviewed these plans with the committee.

The *Long-Range Transportation Plan* is a 20-year plan updated every 5 years. The most recently fully approved Long-Range Transportation Plan, the 2035 plan, is 260 pages. The new plan, Vision 2040, is nearing completion. We seek public input on the goals, planning assumptions, fiscally constrained list of projects, and vision list of projects. Planning assumptions include socioeconomic data, environmental (or social) justice, and the environment. The fiscally constrained list of projects begins

with conversations regarding how much money we can reasonably expect for transportation projects over the next 20 years. Projects are selected for the fiscally constrained list based on funding sources, the Long-Range Transportation Plan goals, local goals, political factors, other constraints, and other influences. Any project that receives federal funding must be on the fiscally constrained list, so the list can be amended.

The *Transportation Improvement Plan* is a 4-year plan updated every 4 years. The TPO adopted the current plan in April. It is much shorter, and the bulk of it is the list of transportation projects for the next 4 years. This list must be consistent with the fiscally constrained list of the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

### Transportation Management Area certification report

The population of the urbanized Roanoke Valley area passed 200,000, and the federal government designated it a Transportation Management Area (TMA) in 2012. TMAs are certified every 4 years, and our first certification was one year ago. Rachel reviewed section 2.10 of the federal report, which pertains to public input.

Significant items from the federal report (**bold** added):

- “the Federal Team recommends completing a full update” of the Public Participation Plan
- “The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with **all interested parties**”
- “part of the transition to being a TMA requires a more **formalized process-oriented** approach to help manage the system that goes beyond simply developing static plans” *The words in bold appeared several times throughout the plan, not only about the Public Participation Plan.*
- Several comments emphasized documenting, tracking, and evaluating public input efforts.

### Feedback on committee functioning

Rachel requested feedback on how the committee was working for everyone. Members expressed satisfaction so far. Ben Bristoll commented that with the large number of people and diverse interests represented, we want to pay attention to how each person can best use their time.

### Review of other agencies’ public participation plan

At our May 8 meeting, we reviewed 9 agencies’ public participation plans. Kevin Jones with the Federal Highway Administration recommended 2 more: Lincoln NE and Omaha NE.

Members felt the Omaha plan was too short, not well laid out, but the visual elements made it easier to read. Members were more positive about the Lincoln plan: better length, identified the 5 core functions of the MPO, easy to read, well written, and straightforward. Members identified the outreach section, the underserved section, the appendix explaining the Open Meetings Act, and the Public Involvement Tools Evaluation Table as worthy elements.

### Public Participation Plan Purposes

A plan implies a purpose, what the plan will accomplish. We reviewed [the purpose](#) of each of the 11 plans and a list of keywords pulled from the 11 purposes. Liz Belcher commented that some plans focused on citizen involvement, but Tampa mentioned other stakeholders, and asked if we were supposed to only have citizen involvement or stakeholders in general. The federal TMA certification report said “all interested parties” implying stakeholders in general. Robert Stutes mentioned future

citizens who will be moving to Roanoke, such as Millennials. Jeremy Holmes commented that stakeholders need to include housing and economic development (both of which are represented on our committee). Carl Palmer expressed the need to educate the public about the little known and poorly understood constraints and barriers to what they need, for example zoning restrictions preventing sidewalks. Morgan Romeo suggested adding to the list of purpose keywords evaluation and continuous improvement. Rachel Ruhlen thought it was likely that Kevin Jones had recommended the Omaha and Lincoln plans be reviewed because they both have evaluation, and the Federal Highway Administration is encouraging MPOs to evaluate public participation efforts. Ben Bristoll thought including the challenges we faced will establish context so when we read the plan or update it in the future, they'll understand why we made our decisions, and it will give them a guide to what they can let go of.

### **Audience**

In May, Liz Belcher brought up the question of who the audience for the plan is: internal or public. Rachel categorized the plans we reviewed and determined that 2 were written for the public and the rest were internal. Dee King commented that asking for public input on an internal document is a turn-off for public engagement. Multiple comments addressed whether it can be written in such a way that is accessible to the public with enough detail for internal purposes, and whether one precludes the other or if we can achieve both. Formatting, appendices, summary introductions, referencing external resources are tools we can use to make the plan reader-friendly. The consensus was that our plan needs to strike the right balance between accessible and specific.

### **Public Participation Needs**

To establish our purpose and goals, we discussed what we need from public participation. Every person in the room spoke during this discussion, either adding an item to the list or commenting on an item on the list.

- Breadth of representation
- Depth of input
- Timeliness, early and continuous
- Quantity of input
- Accountability to the public, feedback (expressed in some of the plans we read as 'meaningful participation')
- How
- Relevance to the public (why)
- Flexibility (make it easy for everyone to participate)
- Integrity, transparency
- Educating the public
- Clarity of purpose, clarity of expectation

**Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee  
Minutes – June 19, 2017**

Present:

Dee King, Salem citizen representative  
Ben Bristoll, Roanoke City citizen representative  
Michelle Via, Roanoke Alliance for the Visually Enabled  
Bruce E. Mayer, Vinton business representative  
Antwyne Calloway, Blue Ridge Independent Living Center  
Forest Jones, Salem Public Schools  
Sierra Steffen, Carilion  
Marci Stone, Roanoke City Emergency Manager  
Kevin Jones, Federal Highway Administration  
Quentin Payne, Federal Highway Administration  
Tim Pohlad-Thomas, RIDE Solutions  
Wendy Jones, Williamson Road Area Business Association  
Mike Shelton, Brambleton Area Business Association  
Stacie Turner, Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Care

Staff:

Cristina Finch, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
Rachel Ruhlen, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

Chair Dee King began the meeting at 3:05 pm.

*Minutes.* Ben Bristoll moved to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2017 meeting; seconded by Antwyne Calloway. Motion passed.

**Public Participation Plan Purpose**

Having reviewed Public Participation Plans from 11 communities with the committee, staff drafted a purpose statement. The committee discussed the statement and revised it. Kevin Jones commented on the importance of writing to an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level, emphasizing using short words and short sentences.

*Purpose*

This document describes the process by which the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization obtains public participation, with the goal of protecting the integrity and transparency of the transportation planning process.

Antwyne Calloway moved to approve the purpose statement; seconded by Forest Jones. Motion passed.

**Goals**

At the last meeting, the committee reviewed the goals of Public Participation Plans from 11 communities and brainstormed public participation needs. Staff grouped the needs into categories to be the goals of the plan. Because the purpose statement includes the word ‘goal’, the committee



discussed having a different label for these goals, such as Objectives. The committee modified the categories slightly:

Meaningfulness  
Quantity  
Quality  
Variety of input

The Purpose and the Four Categories will be presented at the [Regional Commission Open House](#) on Thursday, June 29. Staff will expand on the Four Categories, and send the language to the committee via email for review.

Mike Shelton moved to approve the categories; seconded by Antwyne Calloway. Motion passed.

### **Tools or Strategies**

Staff created a list of public participation tools used in the 11 plans the committee had reviewed. Committee members discussed which tools would be most effective for the people or agencies in the interest category each committee member represents.

#### *Business, Economic Development*

Mike Shelton has had good experience with websites, email list, and brochure or flyer dissemination. He commented that a clickable link in emails works really well.

Wendy Jones addressed the importance of actively directing people to a website with social media and press. For activities such as pop-up booths or Open Houses, we must use the press to drive people to it, but social media feeds itself. Focus groups are interesting, and again need a driver such as an e-burst or personal invitations. She was less enthusiastic about the effectiveness of surveys and found direct mailings less effective. Stakeholder interviews are important for those directly affected by a project. Presentations should be held where people are already gathering.

#### *Environment, Transportation, Safety & Emergency Management, Freight*

Tim Pohlada-Thomas has had good experience with email lists, and older people respond well to direct mailings. He agrees that social media supports the website. However, he finds brochures and flyers expensive for minimal feedback.

Quentin Payne supports a website that includes a newsletter. Other successful tools are online video, and paid ads. The website can be the central link, all paths leads to the website and the website points to the videos and newsletters.

Marci Stone has had success with the press, which can through apps reach people who don't watch news. Utility bill inserts is another way to reach older people, and the Western Virginia Water Authority reaches most of our jurisdictions. She has had good experience with presentations to groups and school outreach, and pop-up booths at grocery stores and Wal-Mart.

#### *Social justice, Health, Education, Housing*

Stacie Turner commented that direct interviews in a relevant place will reach people since the community services board is getting information from advocates, not direct source. For substitute service, she thinks social media is a good choice. Presenting to churches and civic groups is a good way to get the word out.

Forest Jones finds an email list with links and social media with links effective. Many people without computers or internet do have smart phones. Eblasts should be in Spanish as well as English. Antwyne Calloway commented people on fixed income may not have access to computers or smart phones. He prefers utility bill inserts over direct mailings. Material should be available in different formats for disabilities. An important issue is that Blue Ridge Independent Living Center customers are burned out on surveys and distrustful, so an Open House first can build the relationship and then the survey. For more efficient outreach, he suggested piggy backing on another event. Surveys should be easy (check a picture) and should include incentives.

Ben Bristol suggested networking the many service agencies together to disseminate information. The most passionate people will attend the public meetings which is an opportunity for meaningful input and quality (educated) input.

Michelle Via commented on the importance of radio to people who are vision impaired.

Sierra Steffan mentioned an advantage of surveys is that they are less subject to interpretation and better for measurable outcomes. Incentives improve survey response rates. Direct mailings can be used to target specific populations, such as by zip code.

Marci and Sierra also discussed the Carilion Community Health Assessment broad scope survey which includes transportation questions. Surveys like this can be a good source of information for transportation planning, and we can work with those agencies to get questions on their survey that will provide information we can use. Ben similarly mentioned the Point in Time Count for homelessness that includes a question on transportation.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

The following purpose will be presented at the Regional Commission Open House on Thursday, June 29, 4:00 – 6:00 pm for public input.

### **Public Participation Plan**

This document describes the process by which the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO) obtains public participation, with the purpose of protecting the integrity and transparency of the transportation planning process.

Our public participation goals are:

Meaningfulness. Public input may or may not change a decision, but the RVTPO will at least explain how the input influenced their thinking. Input that alerts the RVTPO to issues or ideas is also meaningful input.

Quality. When people understand transportation planning, they can give input that is more thoughtful and practical than if they don't understand the process. It is RVTPO's job to explain transportation planning.

Quantity and Variety of Input. The RVTPO needs a lot of public input, and input that is from different points of view, different needs, and different backgrounds.

## Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee Minutes – July 17, 2017

### Present:

Ben Bristoll, Roanoke City citizen representative  
Michelle Via, Roanoke Alliance for the Visually Enabled  
Bruce E. Mayer, Vinton business representative  
Antwyne Calloway, Blue Ridge Independent Living Center  
Lewis Armstead, Salem Public Schools  
Wendy Jones, Williamson Road Area Business Association  
Mike Shelton, Brambleton Area Business Association  
Stacie Turner, Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Care  
Shawn Hunter, The Peacemakers, Inc.  
Paul Workman, Blue Ridge Bicycle Club  
Robert Stutes, Uber  
Liz Belcher, Greenway Commission  
Aaron Fallon, Total Action for Progress

### Staff:

Rachel Ruhlen, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

Vice-Chair Ben Bristoll began the meeting at 3:00 pm.

*Minutes.* Mike Shelton moved to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2017 meeting; seconded by Stacie Turner. Motion passed.

## Public Participation Plan Purpose and Goals Survey Results

### Background discussion

At the June 19 meeting, the committee had adopted the following draft purpose and goals:

#### *Purpose*

This document describes the process by which the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization obtains public participation, with the goal of protecting the integrity and transparency of the transportation planning process.

#### *Objectives*

Meaningfulness  
Quantity  
Quality  
Variety of input

Staff were to elaborate on the four objectives and seek public input. Rachel Ruhlen proposed to the committee via email the following:

### *Purpose*

This document describes the process by which the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization obtains public participation, with the ~~goal~~ purpose of protecting the integrity and transparency of the transportation planning process.

### *Objectives*

Our public participation goals are:

Meaningfulness. Public input may or may not change a decision, but the RVTPO will at least explain how the input influenced their thinking. Input that alerts the RVTPO to issues or ideas is also meaningful input.

Quality. When people understand transportation planning, they can give input that is more thoughtful and practical than if they don't understand the process. It is RVTPO's job to explain transportation planning.

Quantity and Variety of Input. The RVTPO needs a lot of public input, and input that is from different points of view, different needs, and different backgrounds.

This draft was presented for public input via a survey online and distributed at the Regional Commission Open House (June 29).

Liz Belcher objected with changing the word "goal" to "purpose" and "objectives" to "goals" and felt this change had been made inappropriately by staff. Wendy Jones noted that "purpose" was changed to "goal" because originally the purpose statement was preceded by the header "PURPOSE STATEMENT", and it was unpleasantly repetitive to use the word 'purpose' again (resolved by omitting the header). Liz objected that the purpose of the plan was to describe the process by which RVTPO seeks public participation. Ben Bristoll commented that while that is the purpose of the *plan*, the purpose of *public participation* is to protect the integrity and transparency of the transportation planning process. Wendy noted that "protect the integrity" presumes there is already integrity, which she questioned.

Members also felt that meaningfulness was not clearly explained. Robert Stutes commented that the four goals can be clarified by considering their opposites: the opposite of meaningfulness, the opposite of quality, the opposite of quantity, and the opposite of variety. The committee had brainstormed Needs and the goals (or objectives) were derived from the Needs, so Rachel thought bringing the original Needs into the descriptions could contribute to clarity.

### Survey Results

Rachel reported that, including the 2 surveys collected at the Regional Commission Open House, the survey had over 60 responses. An attempt to experiment with a 'pop-up booth', in which the survey would be offered outside of Kroger, resulted in lessons learned about the bureaucratic hurdles to holding a pop-up booth, a new development in the past 5 years. Rachel has scheduled the pop-up booth for Aug 2 outside of the Towers Kroger.

The committee reviewed the survey summary responses to multiple-choice questions and the survey individual responses to open-ended questions (attached).

Liz pointed out that the multiple-choice options to ‘meaningfulness’ question were not relevant because the RVTPO doesn’t build infrastructure directly. Instead, the options should focus on whether a suggestion is incorporated into a plan or not, or whether a suggestion is implemented or not.

The description of meaningfulness was confusing. Some members thought it referred to whether the input was meaningful to the RVTPO. The intention of “meaningfulness” (from the Needs) was that the person providing the input found the experience to be meaningful. Wendy thought meaningfulness could be described as responsiveness and accountability.

In order for the committee meetings to be more meaningful to committee members, Rachel will set up a google doc to wordsmith draft text, and committee meeting time will be reserved for more fundamental discussion.

While seeking more public input is a laudable goal, it will result in more input that is off-topic, such as the survey response about the difficulties of accessing the WIC office babies and toddlers in tow. **Someone trying to get their baby to the WIC office isn’t interested in talking about a 20-year plan** (Robert Stutes). Part of our public participation efforts need to involve referring comments to appropriate agencies in a timely manner, and while staff currently do this, the challenge is how to let that person know we did so, if the person commenting didn’t leave contact information.

The quality of input depends largely on how well the person understands the complicated world of transportation planning, and achieving that understanding requires a great deal of education. Antwyne Calloway suggested including in the plan a list of the types of information that should be provided to the public when asking for public input.

Robert mentioned that partnering with Uber drivers to pass out surveys could help achieve quantity of public input, but acknowledged that connecting with Uber drivers is a hurdle.

Survey responses and committee members suggested that the survey question about variety was not well written. The leadup to the question was misleading. Liz pointed out that the answer options (which were derived from this committee’s make-up) omitted ‘drivers’ from transportation interests. Prompted by Paul Workman’s question of what was the goal of the survey, Rachel mentioned that staff do not have a lot of training in surveys, although she has been reading articles and watching webinars on the topic, and asked how to access survey expertise, whether that is by additional training or if there are other resources. Paul responded that the City hires Virginia Tech to do surveys and that some students (Virginia Tech as well as other colleges) design surveys as part of research projects.

Antwyne thought that ‘education’ could be a separate goal from ‘quality’, because it is such a key aspect and it is so difficult for the average person to understand or care about the long-term nature of transportation planning.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

**Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee  
Minutes – August 17, 2017**

Present:

Bruce E. Mayer, Vinton business representative  
Wendy Jones, Williamson Road Area Business Association  
Stacie Turner, Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Care  
Shawn Hunter, The Peacemakers, Inc.  
Paul Workman, Blue Ridge Bicycle Club  
Robert Stutes, Uber  
Liz Belcher, Greenway Commission  
Aaron Fallon, Total Action for Progress  
Dee King, Salem citizen representative  
Tim Pohlad-Thomas, RIDE Solutions  
Melinda Mayo, Roanoke City business representative

Staff:

Rachel Ruhlen  
Dorian Allen  
Cristina Finch

*Minutes.* Paul Workman moved to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2017 meeting; seconded by Robert Stutes. Motion passed.

Transportation Technical Committee comments

The Transportation Technical Committee discussed the proposed Purpose and Objectives at their August 10 meeting. Their changes with annotation are available on the [google doc](#) (clean copy at the top; scroll down for mark-up and annotations). One change that was somewhat substantial was changing “RVTPO will at least justify how the comment influenced their thinking” to “RVTPO decisions will reflect the diversity of viewpoints”. The rationale was that justifying each comment could be burdensome. Further research revealed that every public participation plan we have reviewed includes how the TPO/MPO will respond to comments, and several plans explicitly state every comment will receive a response. Our current plan states: “public comments and feedback are considered and incorporated in to the plans, with both specific illustrative examples and a general summary.”

The latest draft of the Purpose and Objectives is:

This document describes how the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO) obtains public participation. The purpose of public participation is to support transportation planning and promote the integrity and transparency of the transportation planning process.

We want our public participation to be:

Meaningful to the public. People should feel that their comments matter. Public input into a transportation plan should be timely, happening early enough to influence the outcome, and continue as the plan

develops. The RVTPO is accountable to the public for their input: a comment may or may not directly change a plan, but RVTPO decisions will reflect the diversity of viewpoints.

High quality. When people understand that transportation planning is complex, regional, and long-term, they can give input that is relevant, thoughtful, and practical. The RVTPO educates and explains transportation planning. Clarity of purpose and clarity of expectation improve the quality of public input.

Variety of input. The RVTPO seeks a breadth of representation in public input that is from different points of view, different needs, and different backgrounds.

High quantity. The more people engaged, the better the RVTPO works. The RVTPO will make it easy to participate, provide different ways to participate, and continue to try out new ways to participate.

#### Respond to survey comments

To learn more about the process of responding to comments, staff drafted responses to the comments on the Purpose and Goals survey that ran 6/23-8/3. The committee reviewed this draft.

Liz Belcher wondered if we get a high quantity of comments (which is one of our Objectives), would we have the capacity to respond to them all? Rachel Ruhlen mentioned that most draft responses were one of a few stock answers, and suggested if we categorize comments and respond to most comments in bulk, the amount of time required to respond won't increase linearly with the quantity of comments. Cristina Finch observed that the value of the response is giving feedback to people, and even if the original commenter doesn't ever see the feedback, other people who see both comment and feedback will get the message that we do listen and respond.

#### Pop up booth report

Rachel reported that the pop-up booth succeeded in its goal of learning about doing pop-up booths. While pop-up booths are more resource intensive than online surveys, she learned that there are a lot of people who are intimidated by surveys, who don't have much experience taking tests and surveys. Pop-up booths are an opportunity to reach these people.

Robert Stutes observed that the first objective – Meaningful to the public – is so global that it would make sense to omit it and ask questions about the other 3 objectives.

#### Exercise: Categorize strategies by objective

As we completed this exercise, the committee realized:

- Some strategies are better for input, some are better for outreach, and some are useful for both.
- Strategies can combine for different effects. A survey can be a way to get a high quantity of input, or if pushed out on social media to target groups can enhance the variety of input.
- While many strategies can contribute to all four objectives, most strategies are particularly useful for one or two objectives. Instead of trying to determine if a strategy *could* contribute to each objective, the committee focused on what objectives the strategy served best.
- Some strategies are only useful for announcing other strategies (such as a meeting).

The committee questioned how effective kiosks are. Staff will research this.



The difference between open house, public meeting, and focus groups was discussed. An open house is a drop-in event while a public meeting is intended for participants to stay for the entire time. A focus group is a smaller scale public meeting. Robert warned that a focus group requires a lot of skill to run. The difference between a speakers' bureau and presentations to groups is who initiates contact, the group or the speakers.

Public hearing and public comment period are likely to engage the most motivated, educated, and prepared citizens who can overcome the formal and intimidating setting. Participation is rare unless the topic is controversial, and comments are generally negative.

The committee was intrigued by school outreach, a strategy used by Hampton Roads. They discussed the value of reaching out to children who will be the recipients of a 20-year plan.

The quality of a survey determines the quality of survey input, but one-word and multiple-choice answers are not the best quality input.

Paid ads were discussed and the committee feels they reach a lot of people.

Press, which could be more accurately termed media or news media, should be used in conjunction with social media. Older people watch TV. Big radio stations (NPR, for example) have better local coverage than local stations. Targeted outlets can help reach certain demographics, for example WTOY and the Roanoke Tribune.

The RVARC does have a digital newsletter sent to about 150 people. In general, a newsletter can have a much higher reach.

The committee watched the [Charlottesville/Albemarle MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan video](#). Staff were impressed at the quality of the video given the small staff size of that MPO. The committee was interested in videos, if we can produce quality products. Video could be a more engaging way to explain transportation planning. People will respond to images of places they recognize. A video could demonstrate different projects and help explain phases of projects. Dee King commented that a stand-alone video is preferable as a Part 1 label turns her off of watching a video. Others commented that VDOT rents time at Valley View Theater and that Grandin Theater does local advertising.

A blog is an opportunity for more in-depth education. However, blogs tend to engage the same small number of people.

Mailings and utility bills inserts are expensive. Mailings can reach targeted areas, such as a single zip code. Utility bill inserts only reach those who pay the water bill, typically property owners, not renters.

Engaging people in long-range transportation planning is fundamentally challenging. Stacie Turner mentioned that when she tells people about her involvement on this committee, they are excited until they realize their transportation issues won't be addressed any time soon, and then they lose interest.

Liz suggested two additional strategies. A microphone at public meetings and/or a phone comment line will help many who find writing to be more burdensome than talking. These comments can then

be transcribed. We can tap into existing stakeholder networks and resources, such as Roanoke City's neighborhood association email list, Roanoke County's newsletter, or Carilion's speakers' bureau. This approach allows us a greater reach with less effort and resources of our own. And while few people may be interested in transportation for its own sake, they are interested in transportation as it relates to another topic such as their neighborhood or health. Partnering with another interest topic creates that connection.

#### Draft outline

The committee reviewed the draft outline. They mentioned the desire to have a timeline for the plans, in a matrix or table such as those in the Farmington and the Space Coast plans we reviewed in May. Expanding this timeline to show how long it takes to go from comment to results will help people who comment one day and hope to see a monorail next year. VDOT has a useful graphic of the steps a project has to go through. People have the idea that government inefficiency is why it take so long to build anything, not realizing that no one wants to be careless with public dollars and public roads.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

**Public Participation Plan ad-hoc committee  
Minutes – October 23, 2017**

Present:

Wendy Jones, Williamson Road Area Business Association  
Stacie Turner, Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Care  
Robert Stutes, Uber  
Liz Belcher, Greenway Commission  
Dee King, Salem citizen representative  
Tim Pohlad-Thomas, RIDE Solutions  
Michelle Via, Roanoke Area Visually Enabled  
Amy Michals, Carilion Clinic  
Kevin Jones, Federal Highway Administration

Staff:

Rachel Ruhlen  
Dorian Allen  
Cristina Finch

*Minutes.* Wendy Jones moved to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2017 meeting; seconded by Stacie Turner. Motion passed.

Citizen Advisory Committee

RVTPO public participation used to rely heavily on the Citizen Advisory Committee. The Citizen Advisory Committee is embedded in the RVTPO bylaws. With the update of the Public Participation Plan, the Policy Board put the Citizen Advisory Committee dormant and directed the Transportation Technical Committee to convene the Public Participation Plan Ad-hoc Committee to develop the new Public Participation Plan, putting off the decision about the Citizen Advisory Committee until the new Public Participation Plan is developed.

The draft Public Participation Plan references a “stakeholder group”, which would advise staff on public participation efforts, help disseminate information to the public through members’ networks, and provide focused input from time to time.

The committee felt such a stakeholder group should be ad-hoc, meet only when there is a need, and membership tailored to the need.

Dee King who had served on the Citizen Advisory Committee commented on its poor attendance and participation at quarterly meetings, the lack of agendas for quarterly meetings, and its overall lack of purpose.

Cristina Finch asked if there would be negative repercussions of not having a Citizen Advisory Committee in the RVTPO bylaws, when the Citizen Advisory Committee was praised in the last certification review. Kevin Jones with the Federal Highway Administration replied it isn’t the group itself that is good but what the group contributes. As long as people are engaged and that is documented, and no big issues arise from the failure to engage the public, we’ll likely receive

commendations again at our next certification review. He confirmed that there is no mandate that the stakeholder group be outlined in the bylaws, and that it could be a committee of either the Policy Board or the Transportation Technical Committee. The important thing is to capture that there is an effort to incorporate the knowledge and expertise of citizens in the approach of the TPO, and to document the process.

Liz Belcher felt the stakeholder group would be more appropriately a committee of the Policy Board, not the Transportation Technical Committee. The Policy Board consists of elected officials who might have a broader perspective of politics, are more likely to consider long-range transportation ends, and have more connections with business components than do the Transportation Technical Committee members.

Wendy Jones felt bylaws should be broad, and generally committees should not be referenced specifically in the bylaws, but rather referred to as a general category. Robert Stutes commented that committees specified in bylaws may be based on suspicion, but are easily manipulated anyway.

**The consensus of this committee is that they do not see a need to have a Citizen Advisory Committee outlined in the RVTPO bylaws. The section on special committees should be sufficient.**

#### Feedback from the Transportation Technical Committee

The Transportation Technical Committee reviewed the draft Public Participation Plan and had some feedback. One comment from the Transportation Technical Committee was that some specificity should be removed from the guidelines, such as references to specific tools like Facebook and MetroQuest, or recommended number of activities such as “2-3 pop-up booths” or “~10 presentations to groups”. Staff had moved the Facebook and MetroQuest references from the guidelines (Section 4.3) to the descriptions of tools (Section 4.2), and had removed the numbers of activities. Liz Belcher felt that, like bylaws, the plan should strive for less rather than more specificity, and suggested removing entirely the references to Facebook and MetroQuest. Wendy Jones disagreed, stating that the plan is the place for that specificity, while bylaws are for broad procedures. Dee King commented that the public should be able to easily understand the plan, and that listing Facebook as an example of social media and MetroQuest as an example of a survey tool helps people comprehend the plan.

The Transportation Technical Committee had objected to the phrase “target population”, which staff replaced with “stakeholders”. Several members supported that change, stating that “target population” sounds exclusive and close-minded, and that the phrase seems to hit a nerve.

#### Review draft of Public Participation Plan

Staff requested feedback on three specific items.

1. Public Participation Plan reviewed for updates every three years
2. “Ample opportunity” - 15-day comment period on other documents, plans, and studies (45-day on Public Participation Plan)
3. Sign up and time limit for public comment at public hearings, Policy Board, or Committee meetings

Every three years: Rachel Ruhlen explained that of the eleven public participation plans the committee reviewed, about half specified the update review schedule and of those, most specified

three years. Noticing that the Mid-America Regional Council plan was overdue for its 3-year review, she had contacted them and asked if they found three years to be too frequent or burdensome. They had replied that it was the right frequency to keep up with changing technology, and it was not too burdensome but it coincided with their Long-Range Plan this year and so had had to delay the review.

The committee asked for clarification of what “review for updates” meant. The committee quickly checked the plans that specified an update review schedule and found that only the Mid-America Regional Council defined the term, explaining that staff initiate the review and determine if a more extensive update or a full redevelopment is needed. The committee approved of that definition.

15-day comment period: Rachel Ruhlen explained that previous federal legislation specified a 30-day comment period on certain documents and 45-day for the Public Participation Plan, and that language has been replaced with “ample opportunity” for certain documents and 45-day for the Public Participation Plan. She selected 15 days because our experience has been that comments come within a couple days of the comment period being advertised or pushed out, and that the advertisement schedule can happen in 15 days as well as in 30 days and won’t get any additional comments. Furthermore, a more compressed schedule is appropriate because of the more extensive public involvement earlier in the process, as outlined in the draft. Liz Belcher thought if there was something controversial, 15 days might not be long enough. Otherwise committee members agreed that with electronic communication means, 15 days is reasonable.

Sign up and time limit: Rachel Ruhlen explained that the Policy Board and other committee meeting agendas require sign-up, impose a time limit, and place the public comment at the end of the meeting. Objective #4, “High Quantity” states that participation should be easy. The sign-up and time limit requirements are intimidating, and having the public comment period at the end of the meeting, which is unpredictable, discourages people who can’t take much time off in the middle of the day from attempting to comment. It is extremely rare that any public ever attend and comment, and eliminating the sign-up requirement and time limit and moving the comment period to the beginning of the meeting would lower the barriers to participation, and if there were a problem, then procedures could be implemented responsively. The committee expressed concern that making any changes to the procedures could make it easy for a disgruntled public to disrupt a meeting. After some debate over the merits of controlling potentially disruptive public input vs. making it easier, Tim Pohlad-Johnson commented that the choice is between planning for the worst case vs. planning for the usual situation. The committee did not come to consensus on this issue.

#### Other comments

Liz Belcher commented that the phases of the Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan are not well explained in the draft. Rachel Ruhlen replied that they are based on the bowtie model of public participation. The bowtie model describes:

- 1) input from a broad audience on needs and priorities,
- 2) focused input from interested stakeholders on solutions, and
- 3) input from a broad audience as part of selecting solutions.

Liz objected to the bowtie model because the RVTPO has never before developed a plan or sought public input with that model. Tim Pohlad-Thomas commented that a new way might be better.

Regarding Objective #4, “High Quantity”, Liz did not believe that the RVTPO works better with more public input, but that with more public input, the RVTPO can better consider diverse needs.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.