

**New River Valley Planning District Commission
Rural Long Range Transportation Plan**

Public Participation Plan (PPP)



RLRTP Public Participation Plan

Overview of the Public Participation Process

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to provide the general public with the opportunity to be involved in the rural transportation planning process. This will be accomplished through the following means:

- Providing information about rural transportation planning activities
- Timely public notification of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings
- Providing opportunities for participation in the development of transportation plans relating to the Rural Transportation Planning Initiative
- Ensuring the opportunity for participation in planning by people other than the Rural Transportation Planning (NRVPDC) staff, TAC and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Plan Implementation

Public Involvement

The following measures shall be carried out in order to ensure effective communication with the public:

- All meetings of the PDC will be open to the public and held at locations accessible to minority and disabled residents. Arrangements will be made for interpreters for hearing impaired individuals, and every effort will be made to ensure provision of interpreters for non-English speaking persons, provided a request is submitted at least two days before each meeting.
- All meeting agendas will include time for matters from the public.
- All meeting agendas will include meeting guidelines establishing time limits and procedures for public interaction with NRVPDC and TAC members.
- The PDC will seek public comments on the annual Transportation Work Program as well as the update of the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP) at TAC meetings. If the final plan differs significantly from the one which received public comments, another comment period will be made available.
- Public will be invited to meetings where any future updates and amendments to the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan occur.
- Public information sessions and/or interactive workshops will be held regarding specific studies affecting the region's transportation network as deemed necessary by the PDC.
- The Public Participation Plan will be reviewed every 3 years and revised or amended as needed.

Involvement with Community Organizations/Agencies

The following measures shall be carried out in order to ensure effective communication with community organizations and agencies:

- The PDC will maintain a contact list of public and private organizations and agencies affected by the regional transportation network including environmental, housing, and economic development groups. The contact list will include representatives of such groups as the elderly, the disabled, and users of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. All citizens and groups requesting inclusion on the contact list will be added.
- The PDC will identify and communicate with populations traditionally underserved by the transportation network, such as persons with disabilities and low-income persons, through organizations and media outlets known to serve these populations.

Public Access to Information

- Copies of the Public Participation Plan, the RL RTP, and other major studies will be made available for public review through local planning or municipal offices, the NRV PDC office, and the NRV PDC website.

Communication with the Public

- Meeting agendas will be sent to those on the TAC contact list and the media one week prior to all meetings.
- Notification of public hearings will be sent to those on the PDC mailing list and the media no less than two weeks prior to the hearing.
- Notification regarding consideration of action on the Public Participation Plan will be advertised in public newspapers for the region. Notices will also be sent to those on the contact list and included on the NRV PDC website. A minimum notification period for public comment will be 45 days before the Public Participation Plan is initially adopted or revised.

Additional Opportunities for Public Involvement

- Encourage and accept public comments in a variety of ways (i.e. by mail, in person, website and via email).
- Schedule public meetings in the late afternoon/early evening so that more people have the opportunity to attend.
- Contact interested federal, state, regional, and local agencies and interest groups prior to adoption of the RL RTP.
- Send out notification to those included on the PDC contact list and request comment.

Documentation of Public Involvement

- Comments made under matters from the public recorded in the minutes of every meeting.
- Records of any formal public hearings for the RL RTP.
- Relevant articles, editorials, letters to the editor, as printed in the “Roanoke Times” and other publications covering the New River Valley.
- Staff summaries of comments offered over the phone, by email, or through neighborhood meetings or other community events.