

Chapter 3 - Public Involvement

The Middle Rogue Metropolitan Planning Organization and its public officials highly value citizen participation in public decision-making processes. The MRMPO Policy Committee adopted a Public Participation Plan in November 2018 which outlines the methods, strategies, and desired outcomes for public involvement regarding the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP):

“Updated every four years, the RTP is a long-range (20-year) plan that contains the region’s goals and policies, projects, funding forecasts, strategies, and projected demands on the transportation system. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) discussed the plan update over several meetings. The MRMPO hosted a virtual open house session, a 30-day comment period and public hearing. Comments received will be responded to and included in the final document.

The draft RTP, and other research, as needed, is posted on the website and mailed to interested parties. Open house meetings are advertised in the newspaper, on the website and by mailing to individuals and organizations on transportation mail lists.

A. Continuous Outreach

Throughout the development of the Plan, members of the public were provided opportunities to comment at all meetings of the Policy Committee. All material (agendas, minutes of the meetings, draft documents, etc.) were made available on the MRMPO website.

B. Community Outreach

In addition to the continuous outreach effort, special outreach and public involvement opportunities were structured into the process. These included virtual open houses and final public meetings.

1. Public Meetings

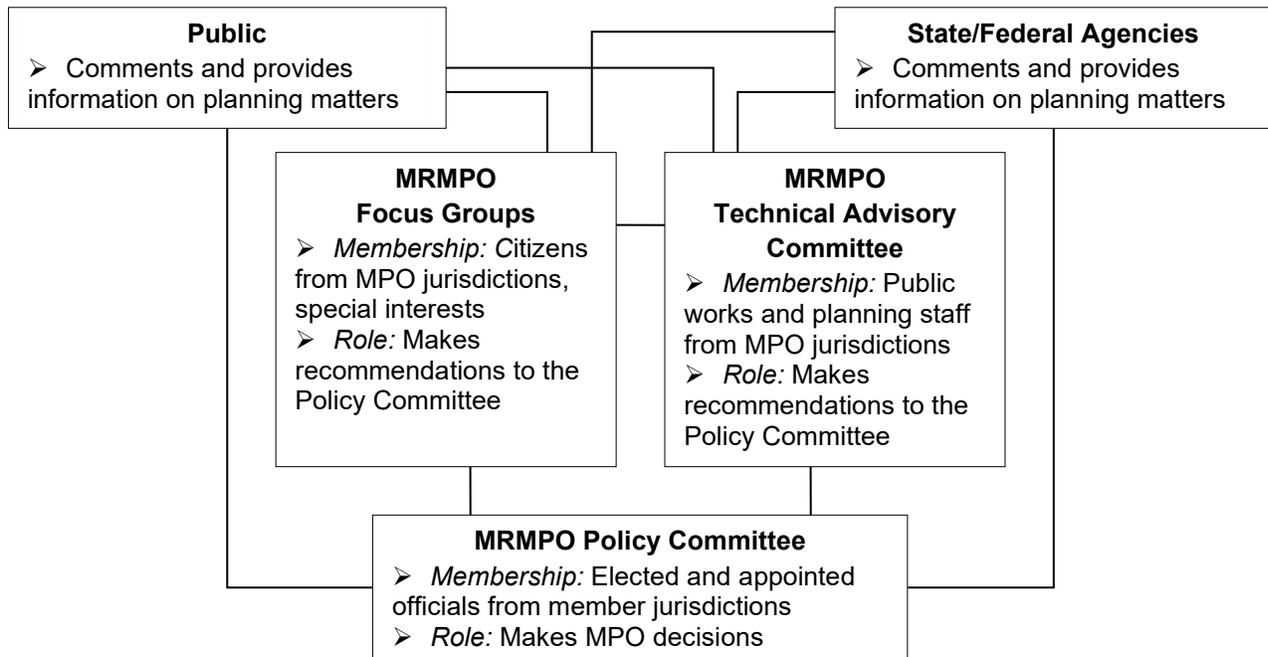
The MRMPO had scheduled and advertised a series of workshops and open houses in the month of March for public outreach and participation. However, due to national health pandemic (COVID-19) these public meetings had to be canceled. In its place, MRMPO staff created a virtual open house to allow for public comment and participation. The virtual open house was posted on the MRMPO website.

2. Public Hearing

The MRMPO Policy Board held a public hearing on March 30, 2020 to receive public testimonies prior to deliberations on the RTP. A summary of written comments was provided to the Policy Committee. The public was also informed about the adoption schedule of the Transportation Plan.

The MRMPO organizational structure chart below, illustrates how the public may participate in decision-making.

Figure 3-1 MRMPO Organizational Structure



C. RTP Planning Process

Development of this RTP update occurred over a two-year period and involved close coordination with member jurisdictions at both the staff and policy level. Critical parts of the plan, including the forecasts, policy statements, and project selection were developed in MRMPO TAC meetings, individual consultation with jurisdictions and public review, and comment. Drafts of data and analysis were posted on the MRMPO web site. Meetings at which plan components were discussed were announced by email. Meetings also were advertised from time to time in the local news media. Activities were conducted according to standards and requirements of the MRMPO Public Participation Plan. The participation plan, adopted in 2014 updated in 2018, establishes goals to provide citizens and interested parties with reasonable opportunities to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process. Beyond efforts to provide information to the public, this goal encompasses a wide range of strategies and activities to enable the public to be involved in a meaningful way in the MRMPO’s decision-making process. Ultimately, efforts to bring more voices and wide-ranging interests to the table will yield better planning results.