



CVTPO Public Participation Plan

Draft April 2023



Acknowledgments and Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the CVPDC staff in cooperation with the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), as funded in the FY2022-2023 Unified Planning Work Program. The CVPDC acknowledges review of and assistance from the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization and Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization. Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and the Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organization. This document was prepared in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (VDRPT), Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the VDOT, VDRPT, GLTC or FTA.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Purpose	3
Policy Statement	4
CVTPO Public Engagement Goals and Strategies	4
Goal 1. Innovative practices making it easier for public engagement	4
Goal 2. Provide information that supports public information and involvement.....	5
Goal 3. Provide opportunities for public engagement and public comment	6
Public Engagement Procedures	7
Appendix A: How to Get Involved.....	10
Appendix B: CVTPO Policy Board and Committees	11
Appendix C: Resolution of Adoption (blank, will be provided upon adoption)	13

Introduction

The Central Virginia Transportation Planning Organization (CVTPO) is an organization charged with coordinating transportation planning and project evaluation for the urbanized area in and around Lynchburg Virginia. The CVTPO area encompasses the City of Lynchburg, as well as the urbanized, or densely populated sections, of Bedford, Campbell and Amherst counties, an area with a combined population of approximately 261,593 (2020 U.S. Census).

The CVTPO, through comprehensive public input and technical data analysis, collaborates to develop long-range, regional transportation programs and projects. Included within the federally-mandated actions of the CVTPO, every five years the CVTPO develops a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a comprehensive assessment of the region's future transportation needs and goals and guides transportation – to include facilities for roads, rail, freight, pedestrian, bikes and transit – public facility investment. The CVTPO is also responsible for creating and maintaining the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a list of publicly funded transportation projects, and developing the (Learn more at cvtpo.org/about).

Purpose

Federal regulation requires that designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) establish and utilize a documented participation plan by which public stakeholders and interested parties are provided reasonable opportunities to be engaged, involved, and provide comment to transportation planning programs and projects that take place in the urbanized area.

The CVTPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) outlines the proactive public involvement process for transportation planning efforts of the CVTPO, as contained in the Code of Federal Regulations 23 §450.316, to support effective participation, communication, and consultation with all interested parties are provided in the transportation planning efforts and products of the CVTPO. The process includes, but is not limited to:

- Adherence to state and federal regulations regarding public notices and public hearings;
- Complete access to information barring legal or fiduciary restraints;
- Input to key decisions;
- Development of a demographic profile in the MPO study area; and
- Development and deployment of innovative public involvement strategies.

This plan also outlines standard procedures for the development, adoption, and amendment of major planning documents including, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Unified Planning and Work Program (UPWP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Additionally, the CVTPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) specifies the following:

- CVTPO plans and programs will include a public participation component.

- The CVTPO will endeavor to coordinate with local, state, and federal public involvement processes and initiatives whenever possible to enhance public involvement, promote the democratic process and reduce redundancies and costs through economics of scope and scale.
- A public comment period will be provided prior to the adoption of a public involvement process and/or any significant amendment to the process. See Public Engagement Procedures for timing and length details.
- The PPP will be reviewed every three years and revised or amended as needed, in consultation with the public, and with the review of all CVTPO committees.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the CVTPO to facilitate public information, access and involvement under a collaborative planning process through which the interests of all parties, including public and private stakeholders, are duly considered. To the extent permissible by law and budget constraints, the policy and technical processes will be made inclusive of and accessible to the forementioned stakeholders.

CVTPO Public Engagement Goals and Strategies

The following express the CVTPO public engagement goals, and supporting program actions, which support the CVTPO policy statement to “facilitate public information, access and involvement”. Included within each goal are the indicators that will be measured and the metrics which will be used to evaluate the strategy effectiveness in meeting the public participation goals.

Goal 1: Initiative practices that make it easier for the public, regardless of race, color, age, gender, national origin, English speaking proficiency, income, or mobility capabilities, to engage and participate in CVTPO transportation planning programs and projects.

Strategies:

- Hold meetings at accessible times and locations.
- Choose meeting locations whereby persons with limited mobility, disabled, and those traveling by transit, bicycle, or walking may have access.
- Utilize maps, images, and other visual aids to present projects and programs such that they are understandable.

- As appropriated, utilize targeted project demographic data (e.g., Limited English Proficiency or income status) to develop outreach notices and advertisements in formats and in publications most likely to support information access.
- Coordinate with focus groups, agencies, and organizations that serve low income, minority, elderly, and limited English proficiency groups to advance program communication and participation.
- As appropriate, offer childcare services at workshops or public meetings to allow caregivers to be involved.
- Make access to interpretation and translation services clear and simple to request.

Evaluation:

Measured Elements	Strategy Effectiveness
Meeting attendance	Increased attendance in number and stakeholder diversity representation
Number of public comments received or participation in interactive initiatives (e.g. surveys)	Increase in project comments or survey participation
Website visits	Increase in website use analytics
Subscribers to CVPDC newsletter	Increase in subscriber mailing list
Translation or interpretation service request	Increase in translation or interpretation services

Goal 2: Provide information that supports public involvement in transportation planning, need identification, and project prioritization.

Strategies:

- Develop and maintain an informative and engaging website that provides easy and understandable access to program and project documents.
- Establish relationships with and consistently share program and project content with local media outlets to include but not limited to the following:
 - Local radio
 - Local and regional newspapers
 - Local and regional magazines

- Utilize jurisdiction, organization, and agency partners to share program and project information via their websites, social media postings and newsletters.
- Utilize, and as necessary expand options, information technology and social media to promote meetings, workshops, hearings, and project information.
- Create visually appealing and not overly technical documents that articulate key program and/or project components and clearly presents how the public can participate and provide comments.
- Offer a range of participation venues to include but not limited to:
 - Table set up at local community events, festivals, or general pop-up locations that correspond to project area(s).
 - Attending local government, organization, business, or agency meetings or events.

Evaluation:

Measured Elements	Strategy Effectiveness
CVTPO website engagement	Increase in website use analytics
Number of media (radio, newspaper, journals) program and project stories	Increase in print media, broadcast stories and direct media interaction
Social media engagement	Increase in access and story click analytics
Number of local meeting and events participation request and number of events attended	Increase in the event attendance request by area stakeholders and increase in number of events and meetings attended
Creation of clear and understandable program and project documents and informational products	Increase in the number of persons that attend project meetings and an increase in the number of questions and engagement from the public

Goal 3: Provide opportunities, obtain, and incorporate public comments, reactions, and perceptions received, as appropriate, during the planning process and, share such comments with local, state and federal program partners.

Strategies:

- Incorporate in all planning and project initiatives clear direction on how the public has the right to and process by which they can provide comment.

- Provide opportunities for the public to comment in writing or in person on all programs and projects being advanced by the CVTPO.
- Provide a range of means that staff may respond to comments to include multiple but not limited to:
 - Email
 - Mail in postcards
 - Voice mail
 - Handwritten comments
- Incorporate the process and location by which public comments received can be viewed and will be maintained.

Evaluation:

Measured Elements	Strategy Effectiveness
Number of public comments received	Increase in the number of comments received
Number of staff documented responses to comments, questions, or concerns	Increase in print media, broadcast stories and direct media interaction

Public Engagement Procedures

The section of the CVTPO Public Participation Plan documents the procedures, or general operating practices, employed by the CVTPO, its committees, and staff to support public access and participation into the transportation planning programs and projects participated in by the CVTPO.

MPO Policy Board and Committee Meetings

- CVTPO Policy Board, Transportation Technical Committee, and other MPO project committees, meeting will provide the format for public interaction.
- CVTPO Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee meetings will be open to the public and will be held in locations accessible to persons with handicaps and served by public transit. In those circumstances where electronic meetings are authorized and held, the meeting access information will be posted on the CVTPO website at the time that the agenda is posted.
- CVTPO Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee meeting information will be distributed electronically.

- Effort will be made to public hearings, meetings, or workshops to be scheduled at times that are convenient to most of the public. Meetings and workshops will include information to obtain information and participation to those that are not able to physically attend.
- When requested, sign language or non-English language interpreters will be made available at Public Hearings, meetings and workshops. Request for these services is to be made no later than 14 days prior to the meeting. For those projects that, as documented in the CVTPO Title VI Implementation Plan, have a known population of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) exceeds 5% of the population, translated documents will be developed and made available.

Public Notice and Comment Documentation of Major Document Adoption

- The CVTPO Policy Board will hold a minimum of two (2) public hearings and a 30-day comment period prior to the adoption of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The first hearing will be advertised at least fourteen (14) days and no more than twenty-one (21) days in advance of the meeting date. The second meeting notice shall be published seven (7) days prior to the proposed meeting date. Each meeting will be posted on the CVTPO website.
- The CVTPO Policy Board will hold at least one (1) public hearing and a 30-day comment period prior to the adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- The CVTPO Policy Board will hold at least one (1) public hearing and at least a 2-week comment period prior to the adoption of:
 - the Unified Planning and Work Program; and
 - any planning documents developed by the CVTPO required approval.
- Notice of CVTPO transportation planning document adoption will be made by, but not limited to, the following actions:
 - Publishing of a legal notice in the *News & Advance* at least seven (7) days prior to a public hearing;
 - Emailing notice to CVTPO stakeholder mailing list and the media two weeks prior to the public hearing;
 - Posting information to the CVPDC office and posting on the CVTPO and CVPDC websites;
 - When timing corresponds to its publication, providing information in the CVPDC newsletter; and
 - Provide information, to include written or electronic notices, to low-income or minority areas.
- Documentation of all public comments received, and where developed staff, consultant, or Policy Board responses are provided, will be maintained, documented, and included in the LRTP and TIP, and, as required, other CVTPO planning documents.

Public Communication and Outreach Process

- The CVTPO will develop outreach strategies that support participation by all persons, including underserved, low-income, minority, those with limited English-speaking skills, and disabled

persons, are able to participate in and provide comment to transportation planning (see Goals and Strategies).

- The *CVPDC Title VI Implementation Plan*, will be followed to evaluate, through GIS-based data analysis, those locations within the MPO area that may need targeted outreach or communication formats (e.g. interpretation or translated documents) that support access, comfort, and communication with these areas and/or populations.

Appendix A: How to Get Involved

The following provides the locations and opportunities by which the public can stay informed of and become involved in CVTPO transportation planning initiatives.

Online Access

- CVTPO Website: <https://www.cvtpo.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/centralvapdc/>

Visit the Central Virginia Planning District Commission (CVPDC) Office

The CVTPO is an organization of and staffed by the CVPDC.

- 828 Main Street, 12th Floor
Lynchburg, VA 24504
- Normal business hours are Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- The CVPDC office is located with the Bank of the James Building. Parking is available along Main Street or in the 4th floor Parking Deck, the area with orange columns, accessed directly from Main Street.

Call the Office

- (434) 834 – 3491

Send an Email

- communications@cvpdc.org
Please include in the subject line as to the program or topic of interest

Attend in a Program Event

- Visit the CVPTO website to learn about specific urban area transportation projects. Throughout the year specific meetings and public engagement opportunities will be presented.
- Register to receive the CVPDC Newsletter.
- Attend a CVTPO Policy or Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) meeting.
 - The CVTPO Policy Board meets at least five (5) times per year on the 3rd Thursday of the month, beginning at 4:00 p.m. Visit <https://www.cvtpo.org/> for meeting details.
 - The TTC meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 10:30 a.m. Go to <https://www.cvtpo.org/central-virginia-transportation-planning-organization-cvtpo-agendas-and-minutes/cvtpo-agendas-minutes-fy21.html> for upcoming meeting details.

Appendix B: CVTPO Policy Board and Committees

The following summarizes the CVTPO Policy Board and its current designated program committee, the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC).

The CVTPO may establish advisory committees for specific studies or program projects where expanded participation is warranted. These advisory committees may provide functions to or be guided by the CVTPO Policy Board or the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee.

All localities within the CVTPO shall be represented on the CVTPO and the TTC. The meetings schedules for each of these bodies are available on the CVTPO website, <https://www.cvtpo.org/>.

Central Virginia Transportation Planning Organization (CVTPO)

The CVTPO is the decision-making body for the purpose of executing “continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive” transportation planning and programming, per United States Code Title 23, Section 134 and Title 49 Section 1607, and in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

In carrying out these transportation planning or programming functions the CVTPO Policy Board agrees that they will:

- Develop, and update at a minimum every five (5) years, a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the federally designated urbanized area.
- Develop at least every five (5) years, in coordination with area governments, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), establish socio-economic and development data to guide the regional traffic model.
- Develop and approve the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and as necessary and requested by funding partners and receipts of public funding, amend or adjust as required.
- Develop and approve the Unified Planning Work Program, UPWP, the summary of yearly planning and programming activities to be undertaken by staff and reflects the program funding from local, state (VDOT and DRPT), and federal partners.
- Develop the Public Participation Plan, reviewed at least every three (3) years, that outlines the actions and process to ensure public access to information and the opportunity to provide comment to transportation programming.
- Develop or establish a Title VI process such that there is compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits discrimination to persons on the basis of race, color, or national origin. See the Draft CVPDC Title VI Implementation Plan at www.cvpdc.org.

CVTPO Member Representation

Voting Members: Two City of Lynchburg Representatives, Two Amherst, Bedford, and Campbell County Representatives, Two Town of Amherst Representatives, VDOT-

Lynchburg District Representative, Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC)
Representative,

Non-Voting members: Central Virginia Planning District Commission Representative, DRPT
Representative, Liberty University Representative

CVTPO - Transportation Technical Committee (TTC)

The TTC serves as the technical expertise representatives from the TPO member localities, VDOT, DRPT, GLTC, and other organization representatives. The TTC provides guidance, plan and program review and recommendation, and overall action guidance on behalf of the CVTPO.

The TTC shall utilize its knowledge of local initiatives, concerns, knowledge of land use, Comprehensive Plans, and local transportation needs and issues to guide evaluation, oversight, and consideration of transportation planning and programming recommendations to the CVTPO. Thus, the TTC serves as the an essential operating arm of the CVTPO.

Key roles of the TTC include:

- Assist in evaluation of and determination of data to be utilized within the execution of transportation studies and inclusion in regional transportation plans;
- Guide CVTPO staff and local, state, and federal partners in the review, comment and recommendations associated with the LRTP, TIP, Public Participation Plan, and Unified Planning Work Programs. Guidance and program oversight of special transportation projects is also a key function of the TTC.

TTC Member Representation

The TTC is comprised of staff-level local and state agencies with technical knowledge of multi-modal transportation matters and may include representation from each of the following jurisdictions, agencies, and organizations. In addition, and as warranted, the TTC may include representatives from interest groups and local citizens.

- Planning and engineering divisions of the City of Lynchburg;
- Community Development division of the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell;
- Planning or Administration staff from Altavista, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Brookneal towns;
- Up to one citizen with technical knowledge from each of the member jurisdictions;
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Lynchburg and Salem District staff representation;
- Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) representative;
- Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC) representative;
- Lynchburg Regional Airport representative; and
- Liberty University representative.

Appendix C: Resolution of Adoption

This page is intentionally blank.

The Central Virginia Transportation Planning Organization (CVTPO) will consider adoption of the *Public Participation Plan* after a 30-day comment period and public hearing.