

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Overview

The Wichita Falls Planning Organization (WFMPPO) continually and consistently emphasizes public participation when developing and communicating the region's vision, goals, and objectives. WFMPPO works to provide the public with many opportunities to address a variety of transportation issues. In return, we receive valuable input for the planning process. The WFMPPO public participation process works to inform, educate, and provide outreach to the public. It involves individuals of the community and the region working together to reach consensus on who, what, when, where, and why to achieve successful results in the existing and future transportation system.

WFMPPO staff gains valuable knowledge, insight, and feedback by talking and interacting with the community through public outreach and involvement. In addition to public workshops, WFMPPO used several creative techniques to enhance participation and input in the transportation planning process. The result has been the formation of a strong vision of how the region's transportation system should progress from the present into the future.

Social Media Outreach

Social media engagement has changed the way WFMPPO interacts with the public. Social media provides a two-way form of communication between the community and WFMPPO, which aides in promoting genuine participation. It has allowed for efficient outreach and noticing of public meetings and workshops. Community members, in turn, provide important information for WFMPPO that, otherwise, might have been unobtainable through typical public outreach efforts. Facebook and Twitter has extended our reach as well as kept our organization current.

WFMPPO staff worked with the City of Wichita Falls Public Information office to develop an informative YouTube video for the public about the upcoming Vision 2040 workshop. Staff posted the video, known as a Quick Hit, on the MPO website and social media platforms. Find WFMPPO on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wichitafallsmpo and Twitter at www.twitter.com/wichitafallsmpo.



Surveys

WFMPO staff created a survey regarding transportation priorities. Staff designed the survey in such a way as to gain an understanding of the public’s view concerning transportation in the region. Questions included (1) what priority is public transportation for those with special needs, (2) what priority is bicycle lane sharing, (3) what priority is transportation needs of an aging population, and (4) what priority is additional funding for transportation related projects.

WFMPO staff designed the survey to be short and concise and to respect the respondent’s time while gaining a clear understanding of their transportation priorities. Staff sent notification of the survey via several outlets, including the WFMPO website, Facebook, Twitter, and mass email correspondence. Staff also provided the survey during the focus group meetings and public workshops. WFMPO obtained approximately 400 responses.



Public Meetings

WFMPO encourages the involvement of all area citizens in the transportation planning process. It is important to interact and seek input from a broad spectrum of interested stakeholders and to inform them of how their involvement can affect a plan. WFMPO values the input it receives from all of its citizens, affected agencies, and stakeholders. It is necessary for the proper development of all transportation plans and programs because it reflects the views and opinions of local populations. The MPO takes a large part of its direction from the public input it receives from area populations. Many times a local citizen or stakeholder will bring to light a new idea or a hidden problem not considered during the formulation of a plan or program.

As discussed in Section 2, WFMPO staff conducted three focus group meetings in March of 2014. WFMPO invited representatives from seven key industry and service providers to attend the meetings in order to discuss the future transportation needs of their businesses and organizations. WFMPO staff met with individuals representing the service sectors of Special Needs and Social Services, Elderly and Assisted Living Facilities, Medical and Health Care Providers, Education and Youth Services, and Recreation and Entertainment Facilitators. WFMPO staff also met with representatives from Sheppard Air Force Base, the Wichita Falls Municipal Airport, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the City of Wichita Falls' Community Development Department.

The focus group meetings provided an opportunity for WFMPO staff to narrow down and define current and future transportation challenges and to find opportunities for improvement. WFMPO staff provided attendees with transportation surveys and other informative materials to aid in the discussion. WFMPO staff asked the participants to identify trends in their specific field of work that might lead to significant changes in how people use transportation in the year 2040. From this interaction, WFMPO staff learned about the need for additional transportation alternatives, more transit buses to reduce headways, after-hours transportation for retail and service workers, transportation into and out of Wichita Falls, public awareness and training, better walkability between origins and destinations, affordable housing near transit, work, and schools, and numerous other transportation problems.

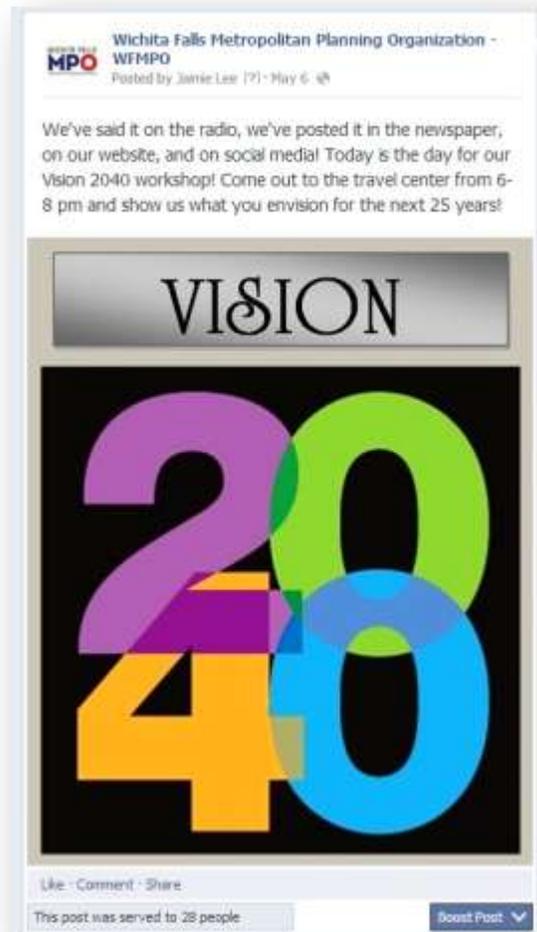


Public Workshops/Forums

WFMPO staff held four Vision 2040 charrette workshops to gather public input for planning the future growth of the Wichita Falls region. WFMPO conducted the workshops on May 6, 2014, May 13, 2014 and a follow-up to present the goals and objectives on November 10, 2014 and November 12, 2014 at the Wichita Falls Downtown Travel Center.

The spring workshops provided an interactive format for participants to work in small groups. Each group determined the future land use and transportation growth they wanted to see. At each table were three large maps of the region that included land use, the current transit route network, and an aerial image containing the Circle Trail system. The attributes on the maps allowed the public to identify those areas of the region that best suited transportation improvements.

Along with the map, each group received a chip set that included stickers and markers. Each participant was responsible for determining the location of new roads, where roads needed widening, and the possible addition of transit and multi-use paths. Each group of participants drew on the maps and placed markers to show the location and type of transportation improvements needed.



Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization - WFMPO
Posted by Jamie Lee 191 · May 7 · 48

Our first public workshop was a big hit! We had a great turnout from the community and received some good feedback for the future of Wichita Falls. It's now time for Round 2! Our final workshop will be held Tuesday, May 13 from 6-8 p.m. at the downtown travel center. Those who couldn't make it to the first one are encouraged to come to the second one and show us how you envision the transportation of Wichita Falls in the next 25 years.



WHY: This update will address various changes in federal transportation funding and your participants will be critical in identifying the needs for roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian assistance and freight infrastructure.

WHAT TO EXPECT: As a participant at this meeting, you will be provided a map of the Wichita Falls transportation network of roads, trails, and transit assets. With this information, you will work with a facilitator and a group of other participants to envision Wichita Falls in the year 2040. Living stations you will plan where growth and infrastructure should go. The meeting maps and input will be discussed at a following meeting in the fall to illustrate how this will be reflected in the final document.

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SIGN-IN SHEET
Vision 2040 - Focus Group - Medical / Health Care

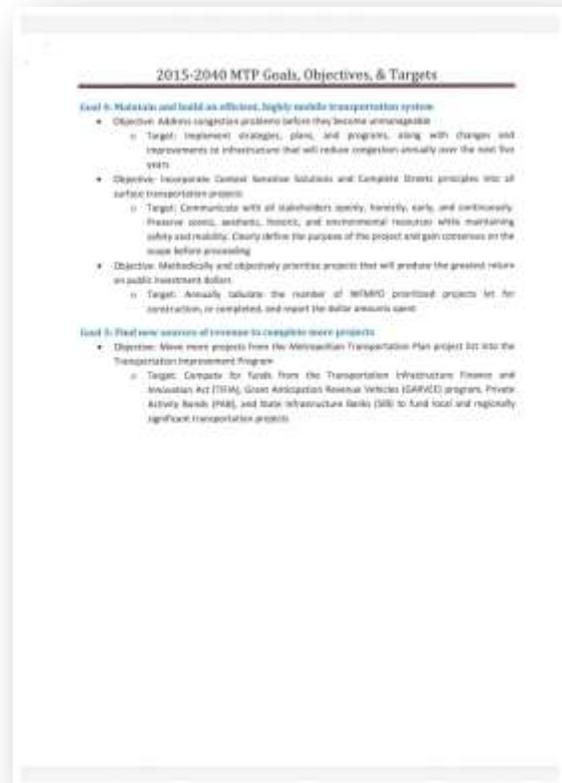
Name	Organization
Mike Browning	Clowes of North Texas
Joe Casbank	United Regional
Mike Bullitt	Health South
Lois Knudler	Health Dept



SIGN-IN SHEET
Vision 2040 - Focus Group - Elderly / Assisted Living

Name	Organization
Matt Yell	2-1-1 / North TX Area United Way
Just Smith	2-1-1 North TX Area United Way
Jimmy Oakley	Presbyterian Mission, Inc
Joe Campbell	Nature Regional Planning Council
Jackie Hamm	The Kitchen
Cindy Idell	Wichita Home Health Services
Rene Williams	NorTex Regional Planning Commission
Rhonda K Pogue	NRPC / Area Agency on Aging

During the fall events, WFMPPO staff invited the focus group participants back for follow-up meetings to discuss and review the results based on the recommendations received from them in the spring. MPO staff briefed the participants with a power-point presentation and gave them handouts of the performance measures containing goals and objectives for the 2015-2040 MTP. WFMPPO staff also conducted public meetings in November 2014 at the Downtown Public Library and the Downtown Travel Center. WFMPPO staff presented the same information to them for review and comment.





30-Day Public Comment Period

WFMPO provided a public comment period of 30 calendar days prior to the adoption of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. MPO staff published the notice of the comment period in the Times Record News newspaper and various other publications, as well as, on social media platforms and the WFMPO website prior to the commencement of the 30-day comment period. MPO staff also mailed the notice to the entire MPO mailing list prior to the start of the 30-day comment period. Concurrently, MPO staff provided a summary of all oral and written comments to the Transportation Policy Committee and made it available for public review.