

## Appendix C • Governance

The Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments (ROCOG) is the county-wide Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), for the Rochester, Minnesota Urbanized Area. ROCOG is responsible for conducting long- and short-range planning, programming federal and state transportation funds, and prioritizing transportation projects which receive federal funding. This work is done on a continuing and cooperative basis with local jurisdictions and agencies responsible for providing transportation service within the ROCOG area.

The ROCOG organization is established as a Joint Powers Board as defined by Minnesota Statute. Formed in 1972, ROCOG's planning area originally consisted of Rochester and the five townships abutting the city. In 2001, under an agreement with the Office of the Governor of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the agencies responsible for the designation and establishment of MPO organizations within Minnesota, the ROCOG planning area was expanded to include all of Olmsted County.

ROCOG's governing body, or "Policy Board", is composed of representatives from local jurisdictions as follows:

<b>ROCOG Policy Board</b>	
<b>Local Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Number of Representatives</b>
City of Rochester	5
Olmsted County	3
Small Cities	2
Townships	2
School District (ISD #535)	1
Resident Representatives	2
MnDOT Central Office	1
MnDOT District 6	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

ROCOG receives staff support from the Olmsted County Planning Department, located at 2122 Campus Drive, Suite 100, in Rochester, Minnesota. Meetings are typically held once per month (usually the 4th Wednesday of the month at noon) in Conference Room "A" in the 2122 Building at the Olmsted County Campus—north of Rochester Community and Technical College off Collegeview Road (County Road/CSAH 9).

ROCOG’s Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) is composed of representatives from the local road authorities and MnDOT personnel as follows:

<b>Transportation Technical Advisory Committee</b>	
<b>Local Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Number of Representatives</b>
ROCOG staff	4
Rochester Public Transit	1
MnDOT Central Office	2
MnDOT D6	2
Township Maintenance	1
Olmsted County Public Works	2
Rochester Public Works	2
FHWA	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

TTAC serves in an advisory function to the ROCOG Policy Board and makes no final decisions on transportation matters. They meet as needed, generally prior to ROCOG Policy Board meetings, with no set meeting date. ROCOG representatives on TTAC consists of the ROCOG Executive Director and 3 transportation planners, with administrative support from the Olmsted County Planning Department. City of Rochester Public Works Department representatives include the City Engineer and Traffic Engineer, while Rochester Public Transit is represented by the Physical Development Manager. Olmsted County Public Works representatives include the Public Works

Director/County Engineer and the Assistant County Engineer.

With work on the development and adoption of the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Update over 2019-2020, several items related to the organization and governance of ROCOG activities have been identified which will need to be updated as well. Following is a list and brief explanation of the items that have been identified for the ROCOG Policy Board to consider, in no particular order of preference.

### Update to By-Laws

ROCOG’s current by-laws were last updated in 2006 and need to be updated. Some specific items which need to be discussed include:

- Consider revising the title “Citizen” representative in the by-laws to either “Resident” or “Community” representative. The Policy Board has indicated by motion, an intent to change from “citizen” to “resident” but may want to consider “community representative” to be more inclusive and reflective of the community.
- Include TTAC membership and responsibilities as a subcomponent of the overall by-laws.
- Add a policy on attendance and ability for jurisdictions to identify substitute members who can stand in for appointed members at regularly scheduled Policy

Board meetings, when an appointed member is unable to attend.

- Conduct of regularly scheduled Policy Board meetings during time of emergency.
- Use of video conferencing for regularly scheduled Policy Board meetings.

## Updates to Public Involvement Plan

Although updated and adopted in 2019, the plan needs to be updated to include lessons learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Topics include:

- Use of virtual public involvement and engagement methods as a regular order of business for ROCOG
- Use of virtual public open houses and other outreach activities and events
- Other transportation informational and outreach activities

## Update of ROCOG Website and Social Media

As part of Olmsted County's overall website update and redevelopment, the ROCOG website will also be updated and social media outlets continually improved and updated as well. Included with this is the development of an informational "dashboard" for display and dissemination of information and project updates.

## Creation of Orientation and Informational Materials

Taking a cue from other MPOs around the state, ROCOG staff will develop materials which can be printed as well as posted on the website to inform the general public about ROCOG activities and what an MPO's responsibilities are. These materials would also be helpful for onboarding new members of the Policy Board.

## Administrative Review

ROCOG staff will need to follow up with MnDOT/FHWA/FTA staff on the use of administrative review of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) amendments. There appears to be conflicting interpretations of administrative reviews and how/when they are used. The use of administrative review for TIP/UPWP amendments may need to be memorialized in the by-laws.

## Summary

With the conclusion of the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan, Planning staff would like to initiate the process of addressing the items above. A subcommittee of the Policy Board is recommended to begin review and update of the current by-laws, involving a process facilitated by staff, working with TTAC, and

bringing items to the Policy Board for feedback and guidance, eventually leading to formal adoption.