

Public Involvement Policy (PIP)



June 2019

Rochester-Olmsted
Council of
Governments

Acknowledgements and Disclaimers

Preparation of this document is financed in part by the U.S. DOT and the Minnesota Department of Transportation as referenced in the ROCOG 2018 and 2019 Transportation Work Programs under Work Task 2213. Any questions or comments regarding this document may be directed to the Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments (ROCOG) at 2122 Campus Drive S.E., Rochester, MN. 55904, 328.7100. This document can be made available in alternative formats by contacting the ROCOG Transportation Planning Coordinator: Dave Pesch at pesch.dave@co.olmsted.mn.us

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ROCOG

Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments

Resolution No. 2019 - 4

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2019 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY of ROCOG

WHEREAS, the governor of Minnesota and jurisdictions representing at least 75% of the population within Olmsted County organized the Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments (ROCOG) in 1972 to serve as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) under 23 CFR Subpart A Part 450 for the Rochester urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation requires each MPO designated with the authority to carry out metropolitan transportation planning in their given urbanized area to prepare and maintain a 20-year transportation plan for that area; and

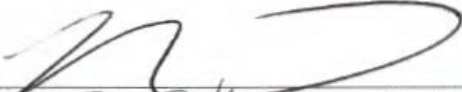
WHEREAS, in accordance with the 2015 Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), the Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments and each metropolitan planning organization shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan and all activities during the planning process; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 ROCOG draft Public Participation Policy was opened to public & agency comment for a 45 day period, and comments have been incorporated into the document.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments approves the 2019 Public Participation Policy.

Upon motion by Ken Brown, seconded by Shaun Palmer, this 11 day of June, 2019

ROCHESTER-OLMSTED COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

By: 

ATTEST: Ben Griffith Dated: Chair 6/11/2019

Ben Griffith, AICP, Executive Director, ROCOG

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Introduction & Federal Guidance

This document details how ROCOG, as the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), will continue to involve the community in its transportation planning process and decisions. It is being updated at this time as the 2045 Long Range Plan Update is beginning in late 2018 and early 2019 and will have a variety of means of public input available.

The passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), changed the rules and regulations for transportation planning in metropolitan communities around the county. Subsequent legislation such as The Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21) of 1998, The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users of 2005 (SAFETEA-LU), and Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) expanded on the general intent of ISTEA.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 continues to require demonstration of inclusive and open public involvement processes during MPO transportation planning. In order for local jurisdictions in the Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments area to continue to be eligible for federal transportation funding, substantial and modern efforts need to be directed to providing the public the opportunity to participate in transportation planning decisions. Other partner transportation implementation authorities such as the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), also rely on ROCOG's compliance with federal public participation guidance to maintain eligibility for spending federal transportation funds in the ROCOG area.

Major guidance in the development of this ROCOG report is taken from 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(viii) from the Code of Federal Regulations within Title 23 - Highways Chapter I - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (**see below**)

Subchapter E - PLANNING AND RESEARCH

Part 450 - PLANNING ASSISTANCE AND STANDARDS:

450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle

transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The MPO shall develop the participation plan in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- (i)** Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (ii)** Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- (iii)** Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
- (iv)** Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
- (v)** Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- (vi)** Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (vii)** Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
- (viii)** Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;
- (ix)** Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
- (x)** Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93, subpart A), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

(b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, the MPO shall develop the metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:

(1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;

(2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and

(3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 201- 204.

(c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision

points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under § 450.314.

PIP Update & On-Going Review Procedures

The ROCOG Public Participation Policy will be updated on a 5-year cycle normally. The following may cause either an amendment or total update to occur sooner than 5 years:

Significant public input has occurred whereby the ROCOG Board believes action is needed. Any discussion of this nature by ROCOG will occur at a normal Board meeting with a 30-day notice of the discussion and possible actions.

Federal notification will have been received by ROCOG staff directing all MPOs to update their Public Participation Policies sooner than what would have been a 5-year period. There can be several causes of such actions by FHWA/FTA, but typical causes would be a new surface transportation authorizing bill enacted or a major Department of Justice law suit settlement that affects public participation in surface transportation planning and/or programming.

Further, per 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x), MPOs are required to periodically review public engagement procedures and strategies for effectiveness. This information may also include data such as website hits, newspaper of record reach, public presentations by ROCOG staff around the community, meeting attendee numbers, etc.

Public Involvement Vision

This ROCOG Public Participation Policy illustrates how, through citizen and community involvement activities, ROCOG will strive to:

- Involve the community in all MPO planning, project development, and service development activities that impact the delivery of transportation services to the citizens of this community.
- Provide multiple means for citizens to become involved in transportation planning efforts that are convenient to the citizenry and tailored to their levels of interest.
- Provide information on both broad and specific planning issues and about available public involvement opportunities.

- Inform citizens not only about planning options and alternatives but also about the constraints and political considerations that affect decisions.
- Seek broad-based community consensus on transportation plans through a collaborative process by involving and listening to the views of representatives of divergent interests and reflecting those interests in adopted plans. Area residents, member jurisdictions, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees or unions, and public/private providers of transportation will be made aware of the activities of the MPO.

ROCOG will provide early and continuing public involvement opportunities throughout the planning and programming process as follows:

Planning: ROCOG emphasizes public engagement in planning studies that form the basis for programming decisions. Planning studies include development of the Long Range Transportation Plan, corridor studies, and environmental assessment studies. These activities offer the public the earliest opportunity to participate in the development of project proposals that might eventually be programmed for funding. For special studies, ROCOG will identify and involve persons and groups that might be affected by potential changes to the transportation service or facility under review. Examples include adjacent property owners, neighborhood associations, and businesses within the study area.

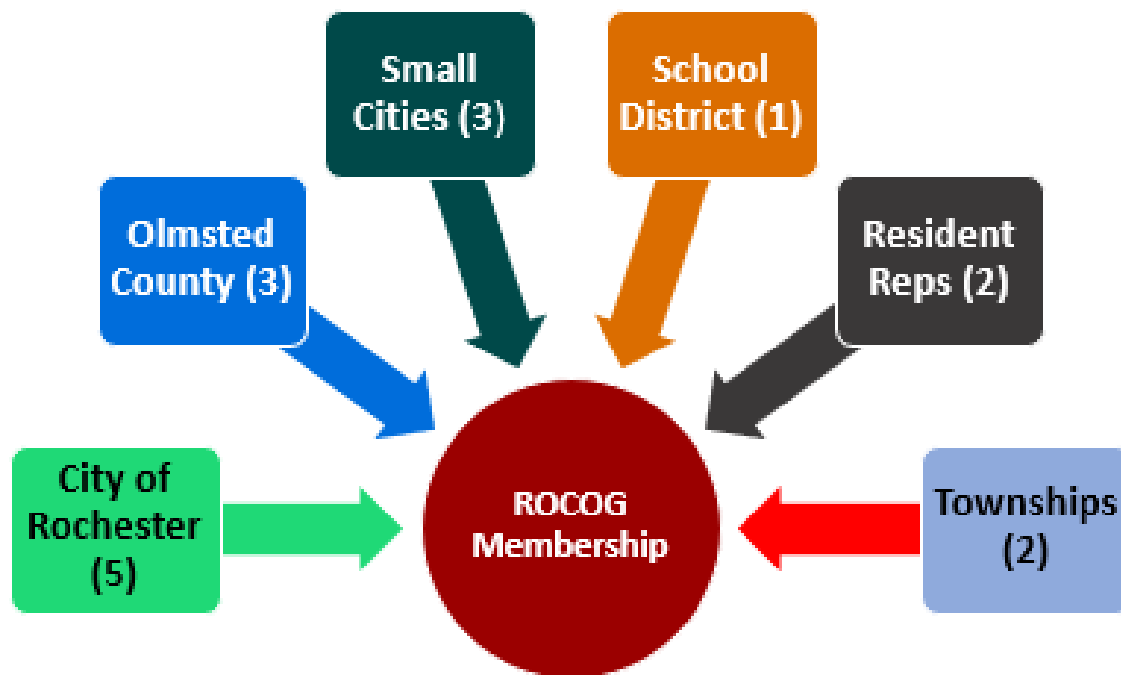
Programming: ROCOG provides opportunities for public involvement throughout Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project selection and programming. These activities include the adoption or amendment of the annual 4-year TIP. In programming related activities, ROCOG may partner with or rely on member jurisdictions to conduct project level public involvement activities. It is also understood that member agencies also offer public comment opportunities on projects that they will implement.

Project Development: Late stage phases of project development, such as preparation of geometric layout and final design plans, generally follow a programming decision to fund the project and are not subject to this policy. Existing state and federal guidelines govern the public outreach activities that are required during these later phases. Regarding right of way preservation, ROCOG frequently works with local units of government to prepare and adopt official maps protecting needed future rights of way. The adoption process for official maps also provides opportunities for public involvement, but under a set of procedures spelled out by state law.

Transportation Planning Work Program: ROCOG staff prepare the TPWP for ROCOG review and adoption in September of each year. The document can be of interest to the public in that it shows the types of work tasks to be done in the next program year and the funding obtained to support the work. During the meeting when the TPWP is discussed and adopted, the Chair takes comments from the public.

Description of The Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments

Leadership and oversight of the Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments (ROCOG) is provided by a sixteen-member Policy Board with representatives from the various governmental jurisdictions within Olmsted County, as indicated below.



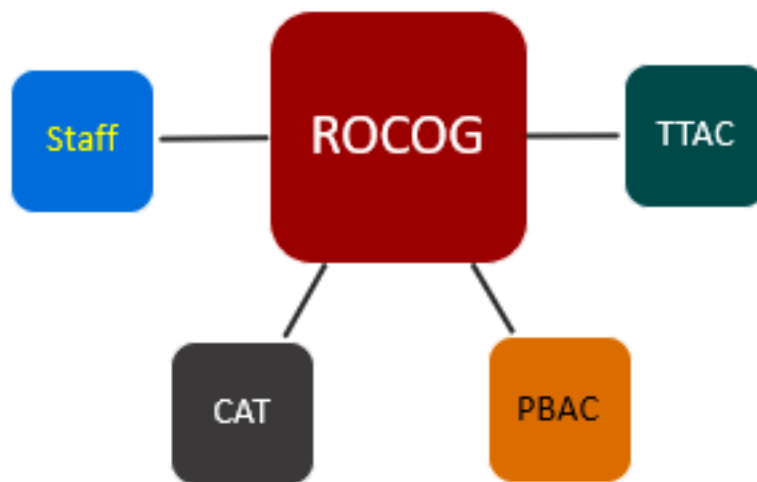
The Policy Board provides a forum for these representatives to discuss issues of common concern in transportation policy and project programming. (The web site for ROCOG is <https://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/planning/rocog>).

ROCOG, as the MPO, is the area's lead agency for transportation planning for the Greater Rochester urban area and Olmsted County. On-going operating costs for the ROCOG planning process are supported mainly with federal transportation planning dollars. Street/highway, bridge, transit, bike/pedestrian, etc. projects expected to use federal transportation funds need to be included in the ROCOG TIP, be consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plan, and be approved by ROCOG. The Transportation Improvement Program is the programming document containing an annual list of projects using some level of federal surface transportation funds.

The Policy Board is supported by the staff of the Olmsted County Planning Department. Figure 1 shows the committee structure with the three current standing advisory committees that may advise the ROCOG Policy Board.

Figure 1: ROCOG Committee/Staff Structure

Standing Committee



Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC): The TTAC consists of local and state planners, engineers, and transit operators from the Olmsted County area and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). The TTAC reviews plans and programs from a technical perspective and makes recommendations to the ROCOG Policy Board. The TTAC was formed in 1974 as a means of providing technical review and analysis of transportation planning products. During the TTAC's review of transportation planning products unanimous or split recommendations are carried forward for consideration and final action by the ROCOG Policy Board.

Supporting Committees

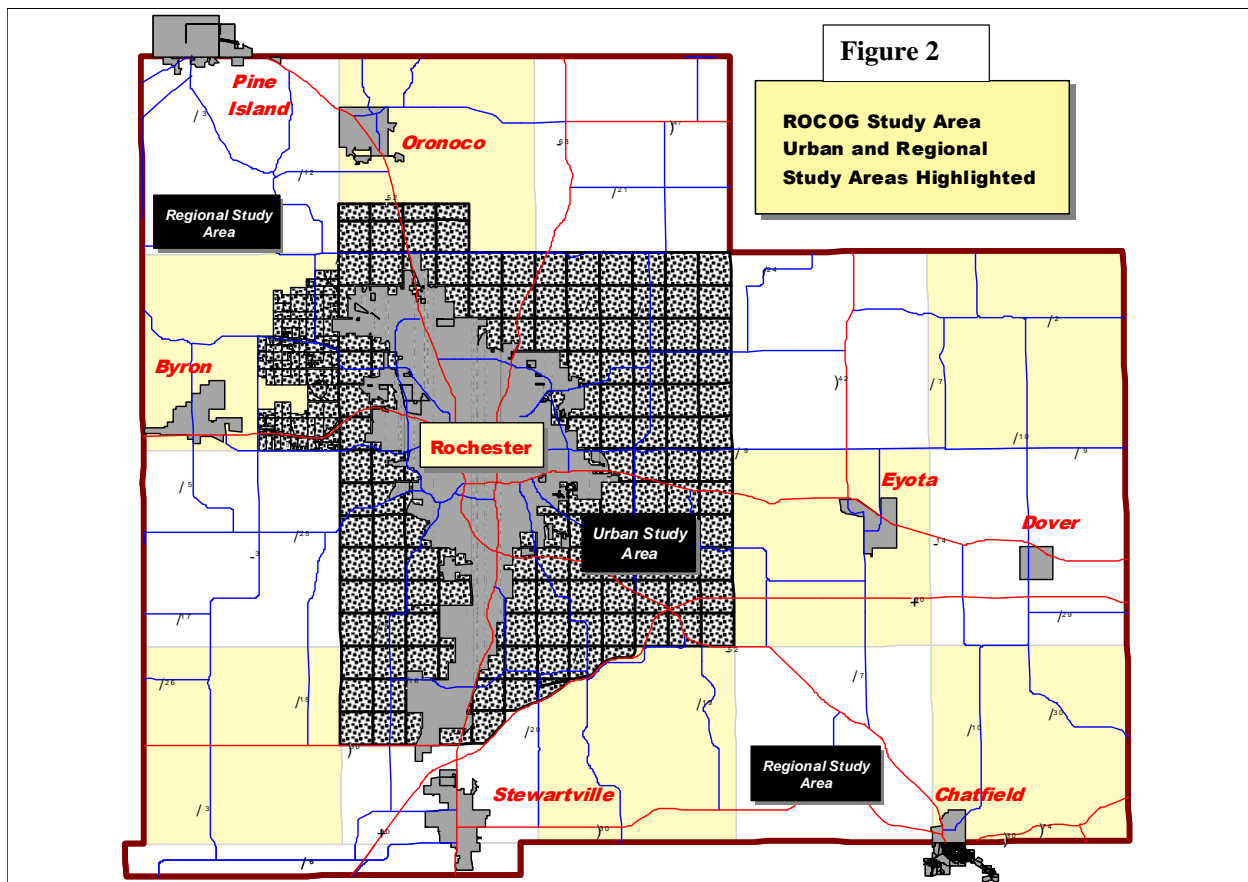
Rochester's Pedestrian Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC): The PBAC consists of citizen volunteers representing the City of Rochester who have special interest in bicycle and pedestrian issues. This PBAC reviews City of Rochester and ROCOG

transportation studies, plans, and projects from a citizen perspective. The committee is staffed by the Rochester Public Works Dept with ROCOG staff regularly attending meetings.

Rochester's Citizen's Advisory on Transit (CAT): The CAT provides advice and direction on regular route and dial-a-ride services serving the City of Rochester and immediate surrounding townships. The CAT makes recommendations to the Rochester City Council, which is responsible for policy-making for the regular route and dial-a-ride services in the Rochester area. They also review various transportation studies, plans, and projects from a citizen perspective. The committee is staffed by the Rochester Public Works Dept with ROCOG staff regularly attending meetings.

The **ROCOG planning area** includes the entirety of Olmsted County, as illustrated in Figure 2, with defined urban and regional study areas delineated to reflect the differing nature of transportation issues that exist in these areas.

Figure 2: ROCOG Study Area



Scheduling and Noticing Procedures

ROCOG Meetings

ROCOG meetings are typically held 6 to 8 times per year at the County Planning offices which are accessible and on a bus route. During some years, particularly during the 2-year process for a Long Range Plan Update, additional meetings are held. Once a meeting day is selected the agenda and materials appear on the ROCOG web site and on the meetings calendar web page of both the City of Rochester and Olmsted County. The Post-Bulletin, the local newspaper of record, also posts notice of the meetings in their government meeting calendar. The meeting notices, agendas, and minutes are sent to all Townships and small cities in the county where they are posted on the meetings boards.

There has not been a meeting cancellation over the last 20 years.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The ROCOG Transportation Improvement Program contains a 4-year list of projects that have some level of federal funding used. Most projects are street/highways, bike trails, or transit capital and operating funding. The TIP is done annually with an early draft coming to ROCOG one meeting before the Final TIP is delivered at the next meeting. Amendments to the TIP may also come to ROCOG meetings at any time throughout the year.

Development of a New TIP

A comment period of thirty (30) calendar days will be provided for public review of the draft 4-year TIP. This usually occurs between the meeting months of July (or August) when the draft goes to ROCOG, and September when the final is presented. During this 30-day time period, if comments received are viewed by the staff and the ROCOG Chair as significant to the point where additional review time is needed or a ROCOG meeting is needed, a meeting will be convened to review and respond to comments before the September meeting. Members of the public will be notified of this meeting using the usual methods. Those public comments that do not alter the TIP projects significantly will be brought to the ROCOG meeting at the time the Final TIP is approved. Comments and staff responses will be in the meeting packet and then in the TIP itself once ROCOG comments are recorded as well.

If the final draft TIP differs significantly (because of project modifications) from the version that was (or is being) made available for public comment, a second public comment period of at least fifteen (15) calendar days will be held before final approval by the ROCOG Board. This may delay the adoption of the TIP in following the MnDOT

recommended TIP development cycle, so adjustments in the ROCOG meeting times may be necessary.

Later in this PIP document information is provided as to how ROCOG seeks out and considers the needs of those traditionally underserved in the entire ROCOG planning process including the development of the TIP.

Regular Amendment and Administrative Amendment to the current TIP

A comment period of at least 7 and no more than 21 calendar days will be provided for public review of a TIP amendment. (Time difference is the consideration of the time staff receives the amendment request and if there is a meeting already scheduled soon thereafter). The public will also be notified that there will be an open comment period just prior to voting on the amendment during the upcoming meeting. As is the case with the development of a new TIP, comments and staff responses will be in the meeting packet and then include ROCOG comments in the minutes as well.

PROCESS FOR AMENDING THE ROCOG TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Transportation Improvement Program must be flexible enough to allow for changes to the first program year resulting from emergencies, implementation opportunities, or changes in priorities. To keep the TIP current, amendments may be necessary from time to time. Amendments shall only be required when the project involves significant changes to federal funding levels proposed for a project or when there is a change in the scope. The following criteria will be used when determining the need for a local TIP amendment:

1) All new projects not included in the approved TIP utilizing federal funding require a TIP amendment.

A "new project" is considered to be any project that is not in the currently approved 4 Year TIP.

2) Changes in the funding levels for a project which result in:

- a) Cost increases greater than 20% for the FTA Section 5311 or 5307 Operating grants;*
- b) Cost increases greater than 20% of the cost of a capital project (FTA)*
- c) Cost increases greater than 20% on any highway related project (FHWA)*
- d) Cost increases greater than 20% on any bike trail/path related project (FHWA)*

3) Significant changes in the scope of a project related to:

- a) Facility expansion or reduction*
- b) Right of way expansion*

- c) Expansion of Service Area*
- d) An increase of more than 10% in the number of additional renovated or replacement vehicles*
- e) Unfunded phases of construction projects.*

PROCEDURE for a Regular TIP Amendment: *(as of February 27, 2009)*

- 1) Reviewed by the Transportation staff of each of the implementing agencies for amendment content accuracy (e.g., MnDOT, Olmsted County, City of Rochester and possibly other county cities and/or townships)*
- 2) Reviewed and endorsed by the ROCOG Transportation Technical Advisory Committee if time allows. Otherwise, notice is made to TTAC members via email.*
- 3) Public input is solicited (see above)*
- 4) Amendment information is included in a ROCOG Policy Board packet for their review and action. Part of the action item is an open comment period. Also, staff provides comments from the public as available to date.*
- 4) Following formal action by ROCOG, it is sent to MnDOT D-6 staff and the local jurisdiction (s) if other than MnDOT, where it can then be sent on to FHWA and FTA.*

Administrative Amendment: *(as of February 27, 2009)*

ROCOG staff may process administrative amendments in the instances noted below. Upon completion of an administrative amendment, ROCOG shall be notified either at their next meeting or via email/paper mail. The public will also be notified via normal communication channels.

- a) Project is being advanced from an out-year, i.e. it is already in the TIP*
- b) Cost increases less than 20% for the FTA Section 5311 or 5307 Operating grants*
- c) Cost increases less than 20% of the cost of a capital project (FTA)*
- d) Cost increases less than 20% on any highway related project (FHWA)*
- e) Cost increases less than 20% on any bike trail/path related project (FHWA)*

MnDOT STIP AMENDMENTS

A typical reason for a TIP amendment is when the state intends to amend the STIP affecting projects in the ROCOG planning area. The following is taken from the most recent MnDOT Guidance for STIP Amendments. (current as of April 15, 2015).

1. A project not listed in the current, approved STIP is added to the current year.
2. There is an increase in the total cost of a project and the increase exceeds the following guidelines:

Cost of Project	Amendment needed if the Increase is more than:
> \$1 Million to \$3 Million	50%
> \$3 Million to \$10 Million	35%
> \$10 Million to \$50 Million	20%
> \$50 Million to \$100 Million	15%
over \$100 Million	10%

Note: No amendment is needed for a project of \$1 Million or less if the Percentage increase does not result in a total cost greater than \$1 Million

3. A phase of work (preliminary engineering, right-of-way, construction, etc) is added to the project and increases the project cost. No formal amendment is needed for adding a phase of work that does not increase project cost.
4. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Transportation Alternatives (TA), or Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds are added to a project.
5. The project scope is changed (e.g., for a bridge project – changing rehab to replace; e.g., for a highway project – changing resurface to reconstruct).
6. There is a major change to project termini (more than work on bridge approaches or logical touchdown points).

Long Range Transportation Plan Updates (LRTP)

One of the more important roles of an MPO is to develop and maintain a Long Range Transportation Plan. Under federal guidelines, the plan needs to be updated every five years, normally with a 25 to 30-year horizon. The next LRTP update will use a horizon year of 2045.

The Plan is multi-modal and shows projects that are major in nature. Projects will be shown for improving the street-highway network in Olmsted County. The transit mode will include a compilation of recent or new planning work with emphasis on the morning/afternoon work trip to/from downtown Rochester. Regarding bike/ped, a network will be shown of major bike/ped paths and trails. The Long Range Transportation Plan is developed with primary input from the transportation authorities in the area including MnDOT, City of Rochester and Olmsted County. Surrounding small cities and townships also have input and the ROCOG Board itself is multi-jurisdictional.

Two significant new developments that affect this Plan update is the integrated transit/street studies done for the Destination Medical Center (DMC). The DMC initiative, the largest economic development initiative in state history, provides a

framework for the use of state, city and county funding for public infrastructure to support doubling of Mayo/Other employment over 20 years. This DMC initiative is also projecting significant increases in downtown Rochester residential and new supporting land uses.

The other work is the update of the Rochester Comprehensive Plan which provides an all new look at future transit in the area particularly as affects work trips to the central business district. This Comp Plan also provides a new future land use update.

There are several points during a Long Range Plan update where public input is critical:

- a) During the Start-up
- b) At the point where the Modal Plans are in early draft stage
- c) At the point where Modal Plans are in final draft stage and supporting chapters are in draft stage.
- d) At a possible point in the process when the Draft Plan has changed significantly during previous public and policy-maker input so as to require additional public input.
- e) At the Public Hearing near the time for adoption.

These are discussed below in more detail.

Plan Update Start-up: Often called a “kick-off meeting” this is an early Open House hosted by ROCOG staff and invited ROCOG/TTAC members to engage the public in commenting on needs that should be addressed during a new update of the current Plan. This Open House is held about 30 days after the main ROCOG meeting where the LRTP Update schedule is approved. Notification of the Open House is sent out via all public engagement methods 15 to 30 days prior to the event.

Materials available would be supporting data including transportation and safety information and detailed information on the current transportation systems. Other information would include the state of the implementation of the current Plan and base maps for the public to identify where they see congested areas, safety concerns, and new service recommendations.

Modal Plans are in early draft stage: The transportation modes that ROCOG plans consider are street/highway, transit, and bike/ped (active transportation). In all cases the major improvements and planned systems are developed or coordinated for Plan inclusion by ROCOG, whereas more detailed plans can be developed by the member jurisdictions including Rochester, Olmsted County, MnDOT, and Rochester Public Transit along with any other partner transit providers. After an early look at these modal plans provided by TTAC and the staff, this information is shared with the public. This next Open House and other public input efforts would occur at about the 5 to 7 month point into update process.

Modal Plans are in final draft stage and supporting chapters are in draft

stage: The draft transportation modes plans would be refined after the 1st round of public input by ROCOG and TTAC input. This new information would then be shared with local jurisdictions such as the committees of the whole of the City of Rochester and Olmsted County as well as MnDOT District 6. An Open House would also be held during this period. This is the point where final draft information will be available for public input/comment for at least 30 days.

Draft Plan has changed significantly during previous public and policy-maker

input: Normally with on-going public and ROCOG input opportunities on modal chapters taking place, many major changes to the draft Plan will have occurred. The one step in the process that can cause changes to the plan elements once again are after the review by MnDOT, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration (note their review occurs when normal public input is occurring). Should late-process major Plan changes be considered which ROCOG could not reasonably have foreseen from all previous public involvement efforts, time will be made in the process for a new round of public input on the ROCOG-approved modified parts of the Plan. The time frame for this added step would be at least 30 days. At least one ROCOG meeting would be held to address this occurrence with an open house held at least 15 days prior to the ROCOG meeting which will include a formal public comment period as part of the approval of the Plan modifications.

Public Hearing near the time for adoption.

Adoption of the Final Plan is done by ROCOG with a formal resolution which then becomes part of the Plan documentation. At a minimum of 30 days prior to the meeting where adoption occurs, a public hearing will be held by ROCOG as part of a regular ROCOG meeting. Staff will respond to questions and comments at the meeting when this can be done, and in cases where responses must be researched, responses will be provided at the next ROCOG meeting prior to adoption of the Plan. In some cases, responses will be made to the questioner and copied to ROCOG members prior to the meeting where adoption is to occur. Minutes of the public hearing will be included in the Appendix of the Plan showing comments and ROCOG staff responses. Notification of the hearing will be made through the usual means of communication with the public as listing in this document. Notification of upcoming Plan adoption will be made 30 days prior to the meeting.

Amendments of the Long Range Transportation Plan

There are times when a Plan must be amended. Determination as to this action will be made in the following manner:

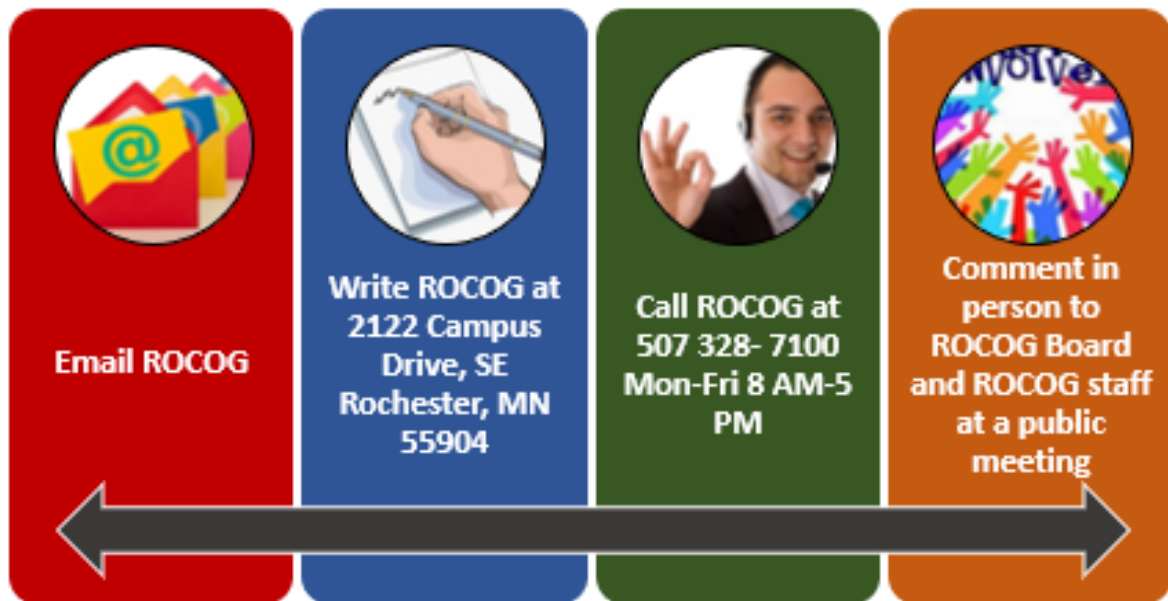
- Staff and ROCOG will first have an initial discussion as to whether a need exists.

- Staff will then discuss the information with MnDOT Central Office and District 6 for input.
- If necessary, either MnDOT or ROCOG staff will contact either FHWA or FTA depending, to discuss the matter in more detail.

If it is found that an amendment is needed, the entire Chapter(s) will be amended rather than only parts of a Chapter(s).

Plan Amendments will be processed formally. An Open House will be scheduled to make the information available to the public. On-line information will also be available for the entire public comment time. All information will be available for a period of not less than 30 days with the Open House held during this period. Notification will also be made of the date of the ROCOG meeting when the Amendment will be acted on, with a public comment period as part of that meeting. Staff will also report on all comments/responses made during the public comment time at the time of the Plan Amendment meeting.

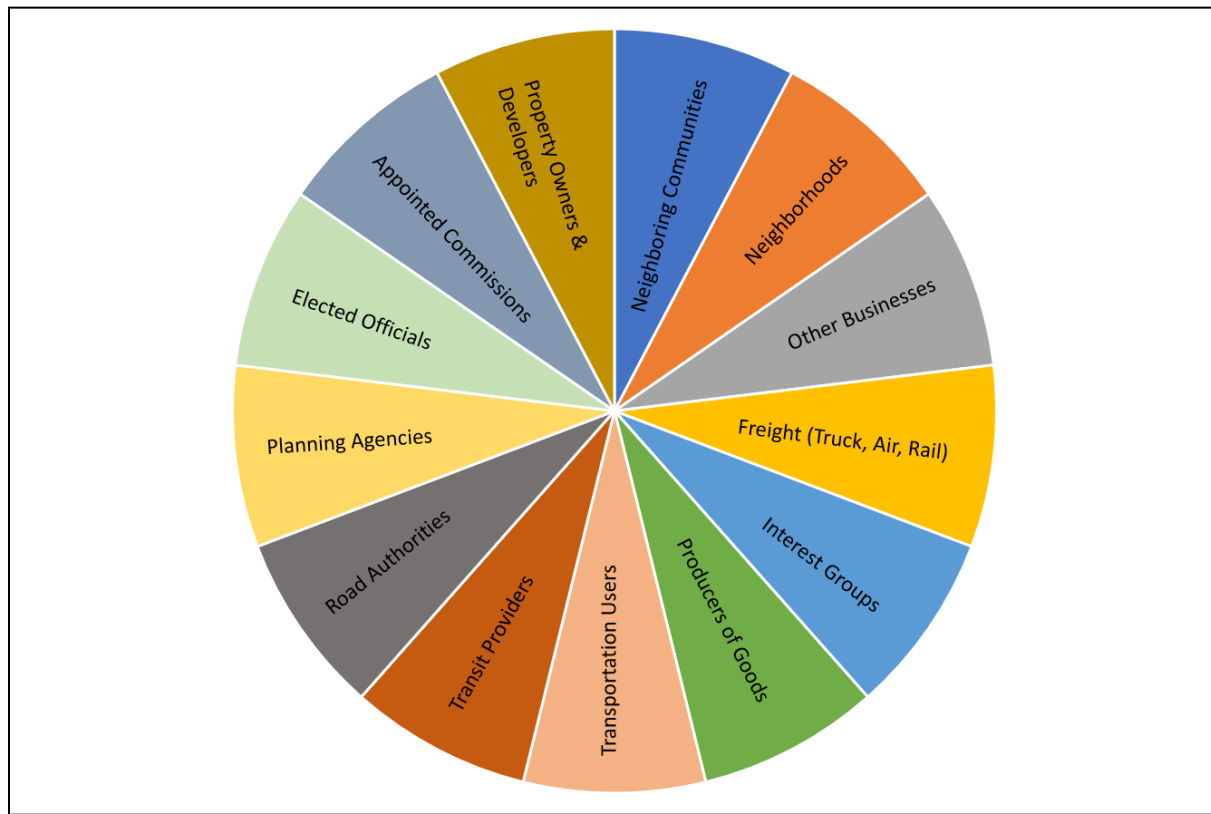
If, at the time of the Amendment adoption, ROCOG decides that they would like additional public comment time, they can extend the time another 15 to 30 days and move the Amendment adoption out to a later date. The public will be notified of this action via all public engagement methods used by ROCOG staff.



Methods of Public Involvement in ROCOG Activities

Citizen involvement needs to accommodate a wide range of interests, as shown in Figure 3. This section describes the many methods that ROCOG now has available to communicate with the public regarding plans, programming documents and timing of various meetings.

Figure 2: Potential Stakeholders in Transportation Planning



Citizen and Community Notification

- Provide adequate notice of public involvement activities for review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to approval of transportation plans and system improvement programs.
- ROCOG will distribute notices and other materials in a timely manner to the public to inform them of opportunities to participate in the development of transportation plans and studies.
- Every attempt is made to design notifications to be easy to understand and provide adequate information and/or indicate how additional information can be obtained.
- Notifications of public involvement activities will include the following information:
 - ▶ What action is being undertaken and an explanation of the process
 - ▶ The purpose, schedule, location, and time of meetings

- ▶ The location(s) where information is available
- ▶ Who is holding the event/meeting
- ▶ Who should be interested/concerned and what are the major issues
- ▶ Who may be contacted by telephone, in writing or via the internet to offer comments and/or suggestions
- ▶ The comment period for written/oral comments
- All documents and information provided on the Olmsted County web site will be Section 508 compliant to the maximum extent possible. This includes those documents used during ROCOG meetings.

Community Outreach

ROCOG staff work with the local media on transportation-related news items and regularly posts information on the ROCOG website to ensure that the public can stay abreast of transportation planning and programming activities.

Examples of community outreach strategies include:

- Engage area residents in the transportation planning process by informally meeting with them in their neighborhoods, at their businesses, at their schools, at their community centers, and in other locations throughout the area.
- ROCOG will at times rely on the public involvement activities of its member jurisdictions and will strive to coordinate its public involvement activities to complement, and not to duplicate, those activities.
- Staff may make presentations to community groups such as the League of Women Voters, business groups, neighborhood groups, and service clubs.
- ROCOG will cooperate with the Minnesota Department of Transportation in both planning and public participation efforts.
- The Rochester Chamber of Commerce Transportation Forum provides local businesses and members of the community a voice in the transportation needs of the local economy. Monthly meetings are attended by some members of ROCOG and TTAC and provide an opportunity for discussion of important local business transportation needs.
- ROCOG will engage community residents in the transportation planning process via Facebook as a new means to get direct public input.

- When appropriate, surveys will be available on ROCOG's web site for direct public input

Outreach to Under-Represented Groups

- ROCOG will identify barriers to public participation for those traditionally under-represented in the transportation planning process and attempt to transcend those barriers or devise additional outreach efforts to these populations.
- Public engagement opportunities will target low income and minority populations and Limited English Proficient populations identified in ROCOG's Transportation Infrastructure Environmental Justice Protocol and Title VI Non-Discrimination and Limited English Proficiency Plan; public meetings will be conducted, as needed, at ADA compliant venues in proximity to these communities.
- Where projects involve areas with significant populations of persons of limited English language ability, interpreters will be provided for public meetings, notices, and informational materials.

Appendix A provides more information on this subject.

Evaluation of Public Involvement Efforts

- ROCOG will periodically review the effectiveness of the public participation process, including a critical look at how much is enough, and revise public participation processes as necessary. Information such as web site hits and comments received throughout the year will be discussed with the ROCOG Board.

Meeting Scheduling, Location, and Accessibility:

- Public meetings will be scheduled to increase the opportunity for attendance by stakeholders and the general public. This may require scheduling meetings during non-traditional business hours, holding more than one meeting at different times of the day or on different days, and checking other community activities to avoid conflicts.
- When a public meeting or public hearing is focused on a planning study or program related to a specific geographic area or jurisdiction within the ROCOG area, the meeting or hearing will be held, if possible, within that geographic area or jurisdiction. Appropriate elected officials as identified in the stakeholder analysis should be consulted and/or informed of relevant outreach activities within their jurisdictions.

- Public meetings will be held in locations accessible to people with disabilities and should be located near a transit route when possible.
- ROCOG will continue to observe open public meeting requirements (Ch. 13D, Minnesota Statutes, known as the Minnesota Open Meeting Law).

Communication Tools

The varied means of communication with the public that ROCOG will use in its efforts to distribute information to the public will include:

- **Web Resources:** ROCOG will post, update, and make available project information on its web site, including such information as project overviews, project schedule information, notices of public meetings, project reports, comment and contact links, and project-specific surveys on key issues as well as more general on-line surveys. Web resources will be Section 508 compliant, to the maximum extent possible, to make them accessible to those with disabilities.
- **Project Newsletters:** Newsletters (paper and email) can be used to disseminate information to individuals and organizations who are part of project mailing lists as well as posting on the project web site. Newsletters would be used at key milestones in projects to inform citizens about project goals, upcoming meetings, key study findings and decision points for the project.
- **Media Coordination:** Press releases, meeting advertisements, and event announcements will be coordinated with appropriate media to gain broad exposure for the public process. Public access channels may be used where appropriate to broadcast information about public meetings and public input availability. Media contacts will include newspapers, radio, and television.
- **Facebook:** ROCOG started a Facebook page in February 2019 to use for a wide variety of information dissemination. Primarily started to assist in the 2045 Long Range Plan update, it will be used to engage the public in annual TIP development, the Work Program development and project work of ROCOG into the future. Links will be used regularly to share information to/from partners such as Olmsted County, the City of Rochester and Small Cities, and MnDOT.
- **Story Maps:** The County Planning Dept GIS staff have expertise in the use of a new on-line application called Story Maps. This will be used to engage the public in reviewing/commenting on LRTP development as well as direct on-line input into the proposed and final LRTP modal projects, i.e. street/highway, multi-use trails/path, and transit. Once Story Maps are tested and workable in the Fall of 2019, it's likely that this communication method will be expanded for use outside of LRTP updates, to include corridor/sub-area studies and the TIP development.

- **Legislative Briefing:** ROCOG may give legislative briefings during the course of projects when deemed appropriate to the goals of the project and identified as part of the public involvement plan for a project.
- **Group Presentations:** Slide shows that can be presented to business and community groups will be prepared when deemed appropriate and used in outreach efforts to distribute information on specific planning projects or the general activities of ROCOG.
- **"Going to Them":** During the Long Range Plan updates the policy is for staff to "go to them" to bring draft and final draft Plan components to places where the public congregates to gather input. Festivals, farmer's markets, central downtown skyway locations, etc would be typical examples. The TIP development can also benefit from this type of communication, particularly after/during the development of the 2045 LRTP Update.
- **Visualization Tools:** Visualization tools will be used where there will be limited use of rendering tools but greater use of graphics such as charts, maps, tables, or illustrations highlighting typical or standard project elements.

Project Level Studies

At the project study level such as corridor and subarea studies, ROCOG organizes project committees composed of a mix of residents, interested parties, and jurisdictional representatives to provide guidance on the process and input into the findings and analysis of the study. Typically there will be a **Project Steering Group** to provide strategic direction in terms of the tasks and scope of work for the project, a **Policy Advisory Group** reflective of local political leadership and the key interested parties affected by the project, and a **Technical Advisory Committee** composed of engineers and planners from ROCOG and affected jurisdictions for the purpose of reviewing the technical analysis and assessments completed as part of the project. Resource agencies are invited to participate at the Policy Group or Technical Advisory group level to provide input on environmental issues that may arise as part of the project.

Project based public involvement will use the methods described above and will include Environmental Justice populations in the study area as described in Appendix A. The participation of these parties is invited in a number of ways, including web input, public information meetings, public hearings, project forums, or small group meetings (*see glossary for description of these public involvement methodologies*).

Responding to Public Comments and Questions

- ROCOG will document public comments received during a study or development of the Long Range Transportation Plan or TIP and will document responses to public comments. Documentation will be accomplished in a manner appropriate to the project and the nature of the comments. Documentation may consist of meeting minutes, a file of letters, included as a separate section or addendum to a project report, or as a special memo that summarizes the comments.
- A written summary will be provided to decision makers at key points in the planning process, such as when members of the relevant study committee must decide to narrow the range of alternatives, select a preferred alternative, or make a decision of a similar nature. The written summary of comments made at a public information meeting will be provided to committee members.
- Comments will be responded to in a timely manner. As appropriate, comments and concerns may be addressed as a group rather than individually. A general summary of public comments and agency responses will be provided to participants throughout the planning process, while maintaining a complete record of all public input for public review.

List of Appendices:

1 Appendix A: Outreach to Environmental Justice Populations

2 Appendix B: Glossary

3 Appendix C: Public Comments and ROCOG responses during the 45-day comment period for this document. (Includes during the ROCOG meeting prior to the action to adopt this document).

APPENDIX A: OUTREACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POPULATIONS

Environmental Justice: Consistent with *Environmental Justice Executive Order (EO 12898)*, ROCOG will consider the needs of groups or communities not traditionally well-served by existing transportation systems. These include but are not limited to low-income households and minority households. To assure adequate participation of these groups, it may be necessary to conduct outreach efforts beyond those normally conducted. At a minimum, ROCOG will identify groups that it needs to involve, add

them to appropriate mailing lists, and define methods for engaging them in relevant programs or projects.

ROCOG adopted the **Title VI Non-Discrimination and Limited English Proficiency Plan** in October 2017. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits federal agencies and sub-recipients of federal funds from discriminating based on race, color or national origin, and against participants or clients of programs that receive federal funding. In addition to nondiscrimination, this plan provides information relative to ***Presidential Executive Order 13166*** which mandates that federal agencies ensure that people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to federally-conducted and/or funded programs and activities.

Figure 3: Communities of Concern Population in ROCOG Planning Area

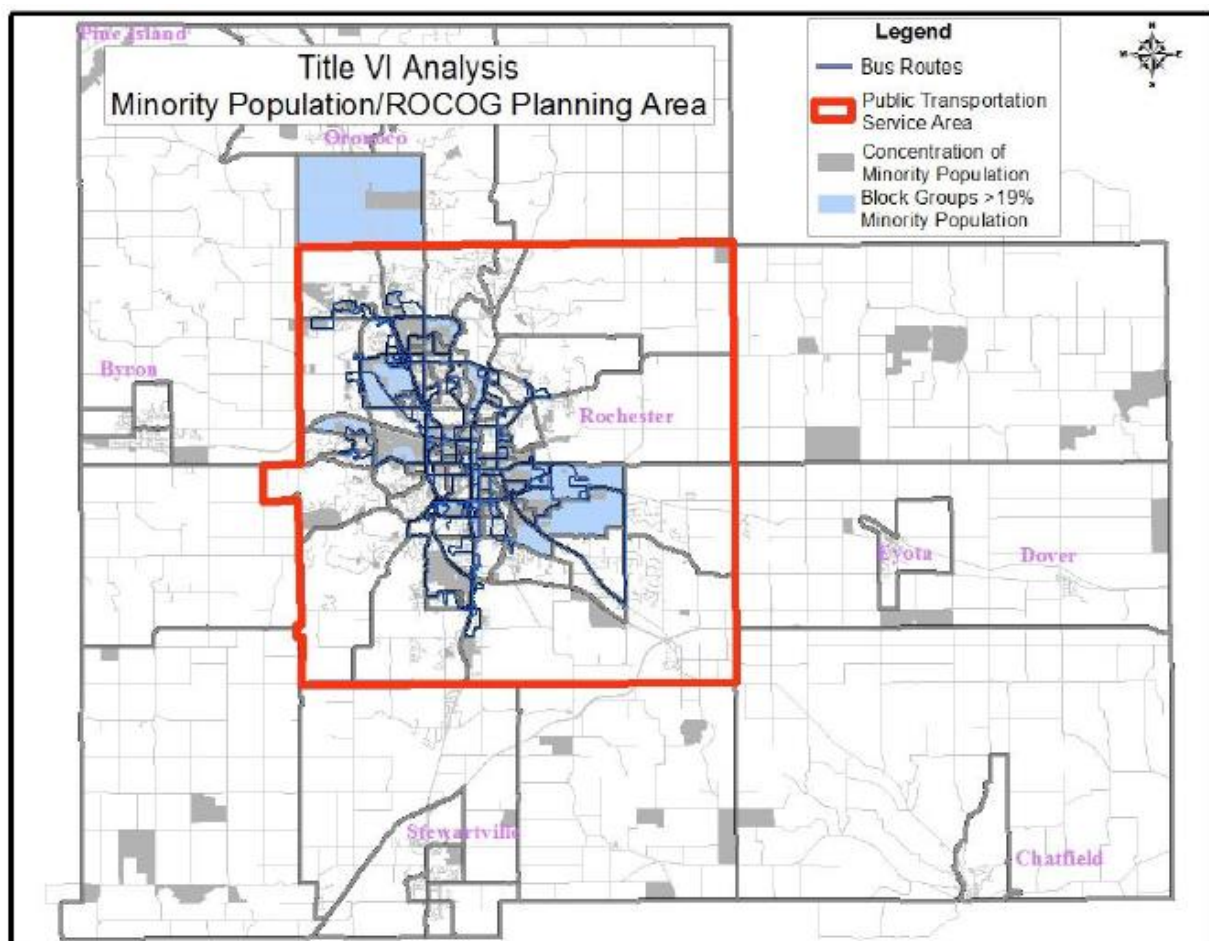


Figure 3 illustrates Communities of Concern in the ROCOG planning area for those block groups where minority populations make up more than 19.7% of the population. This data is from 2005 Census information. The major concentrations of minority populations at this level are almost exclusively located within the urbanized area of Rochester, with

only one block group outside the public transportation service north of Rochester along TH 52. This block group is the location of an isolated mobile home park in a largely rural area that provides low cost housing for families and individuals. No public transportation investment has been made in this area due to the low density of population which renders attempts to provide public transit service cost-ineffective. Table 1 highlights the threshold of community of concern demographic information in the ROCOG Area as found in the document ***Non-Discrimination and Limited English Proficiency Plan 2017***.

Table 1: Threshold of Communities of Concern Population

Demographic Information*	Population	Percentage of Total Pop
Total Population (2011-2015 ACS)	148,736	
Minority Population (2011-2015 ACS)	26,787	18%
Language Spoken at Home Other Than English (ACS 2011-2015)	17,822	12%
Limited English Proficient (LEP) (ACS 2011-2015 for Planning Area)	6,869	5%

* Minority means a person who is Black, Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian and Alaskan Native.

* Limited English Proficiency means a person who does not speak English as their primary language and who have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

Further discussion of these issues is provided in the Rochester – Olmsted Council of Governments document titled ***A Matter of Fairness: ROCOG's Transportation Infrastructure Environmental Justice Protocol***, dated April 8th, 2016. Specific outreach strategies in that document are summarized below.

Outreach to Environmental Justice Populations

At the project level, ROCOG will encourage road authorities and other transportation service providers to identify a range of options for mitigating adverse impacts of transportation investments, relying on standard engineering practices as the source for those options. In addition, ROCOG area communities are committed to involving affected neighborhoods in refining and advising on selection of preferred options.

At the plan and program levels, ROCOG will adhere to the strategies identified in the ROCOG Citizen Participation element of the Long Range Plan to involve persons of diverse backgrounds and interests in its advisory committees and to fully involve the general public in its public outreach efforts. Efforts to involve disadvantaged populations generally and environmental justice communities specifically in transportation mitigation efforts at the project level will include the measures described below.

1.1 General

In addition to the special outreach efforts to disadvantaged populations described in the ROCOG Citizen Participation element of the Long Range Plan, development of mitigation efforts will include notices of meetings and other materials sent directly to tenants and owners of property in the area affected by the proposed mitigation. For areas served by neighborhood associations, ROCOG will also contact neighborhood associations serving geographic areas that include environmental justice populations, including the Kutzky Park Neighborhood Association; the East Side Pioneers Neighborhood Association; the Southeast Settlers Neighborhood Association; the Goose Egg Park Neighborhood Association; and the Rochester Neighborhood Resource Center.

1.2 Low Income

ROCOG will involve the following community organizations in plan and program level efforts and will rely on these organizations to assist in contacting and advocating for low income populations in the ROCOG area:

- the Olmsted County Community Action Program;
- the Olmsted County Housing and Redevelopment Authority;
- Channel One, Inc. (the local food shelf);
- the Salvation Army;
- Family Service Rochester;

- Lutheran Social Services;
- Southeast Minnesota Workforce Center; and
- Catholic Charities.

In addition, when transportation investments affect employers with significant numbers of low wage employees, ROCOG will contact those employers to ask for assistance in contacting their employees and providing information about projects and mitigation options.

1.3 Race and Ethnicity

ROCOG will involve the following community organizations in plan and program level efforts and will rely on these organizations to assist in contacting and advocating for ethnic and racial minority populations in the ROCOG area:

- the Olmsted County Community Action Program;
- the Rochester branch of the NAACP;
- the Rochester – Olmsted County Diversity Council;
- the Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association;
- the Rochester International Association;
- and faith organizations serving minority communities, especially religious institutions serving recent immigrants to the ROCOG area (see below).

1.4 Refugee and Immigrant Status

ROCOG will involve the following community organizations in plan and program level efforts and will rely on these organizations to assist in contacting and advocating for ethnic and racial minority populations in the ROCOG area:

- the Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association,
- the Rochester Islamic Center,
- the Buddhist Support Society,
- Somali Refugee Resettlement,
- the Rochester International Association,
- the Olmsted County Community Action Program,
- the Rochester School District English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Adult Basic Education programs,
- Lutheran Social Services, and Catholic Charities.

ROCOG will also work through employers and apartment management companies to distribute information. Because a number of recent refugees and immigrants have limited English language ability, ROCOG's outreach measures will include efforts to provide translation and interpreter services at meetings and in other written and oral contacts.

1.5 Elderly Status

ROCOG will involve the following community organizations in plan and program level efforts and will rely on these organizations to assist in contacting and advocating for ethnic and racial minority populations in the ROCOG area:

- Elder Network,
- Family Service Rochester,
- the Senior Citizens Services, Inc., and
- owners and tenant groups in senior housing complexes.

ROCOG's outreach measures will include efforts to overcome barriers to participation through such measures as the use of TDD devices.

1.6 Other Groups Not Concentrated in Neighborhoods

ROCOG will make special efforts to involve other populations in its planning efforts, where those groups have a potential to have special transportation needs or increased risk of adverse impacts. To accomplish this, ROCOG will make efforts to involve representatives of the following groups whenever changes in services or other transportation projects may affect their interests.

- disabled individuals (representatives could include Southeast Minnesota Center for Independent Living, Possibilities of Southern Minnesota, Family Service Rochester, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and operators of transitional housing for chemically dependent and others recovering from impairment);
- children (who could be represented by youth and child service and advocacy organizations such as Childcare Resource and Referral, the Olmsted County Youth Commission, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Rochester Area Family Y; and/or by area school districts);
- residents of group quarters and transitional housing;
- landlords and tenants of low income housing; and
- employers and employees of industries with high proportions of low-wage and off-shift workers.

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

Note: This Glossary is provided to assist with terms that may appear in any ROCOG produced documents.

Access/Accessibility The opportunity to reach a given end use within a certain time frame, or without being impeded by physical, social or economic barriers.

Alternative Modes of Transportation Forms of transportation that provide transportation alternatives to the use of single-occupant automobiles. Examples include: rail, transit, carpools, bicycles and walking.

Amendment A major change in the approved TIP or Plan that requires public review and comment and approval by ROCOG.

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Federal civil rights legislation for persons with disabilities, signed into law in 1990, that prohibits discrimination specifically in the areas of employment, public accommodation, public services, telecommunications and transportation. Transportation requirements include the provision of “comparable paratransit service” that is equivalent to general public fixed-route service for persons who are unable to use regular bus service due to a disability.

Arterial Street A class of street serving major traffic movements (higher-speed, high volume) for travel between major points.

Attainment Area An area considered to have air quality that meets or exceeds the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) health standards used in the Clean Air Act. Non-attainment areas are areas considered not to have met these standards for designated pollutants. An area may be an attainment area for one pollutant and a non-attainment area for others. ROCOG is in attainment.

Capacity A transportation facility's ability to accommodate a moving stream of people or vehicles in a given time period. The maximum rate of flow at which persons or vehicles can be reasonably expected to traverse a point or uniform segment of a lane or roadway during a specified time period under prevailing roadway, traffic and control conditions; usually expressed as vehicles per hour or persons per hour.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) A plan for future capital infrastructure and program expenditures which identifies each capital project, its anticipated start and completion and allocates existing funds and known revenue sources for a given period of time. Most local governments have a CIP.

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) – Selected for a specific issue, project or process, a group of citizens volunteer or are appointed by ROCOG to represent citizen interests on regional transportation issues.

Clean Air Act (CAA) Federal statutes established by the United States Congress which set the nation's air quality goals and the process for achieving those goals. The original Clean Air Act was passed in 1963, but the national air pollution control program is actually based on the 1970 version of the law. The 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments are the most far-reaching revisions of the 1970 law.

Congestion A condition under which the number of vehicles using a facility is great enough to cause reduced speeds and increased travel times.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) A categorical Federal-aid funding program created with the ISTEA. Directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting national air quality standards. CMAQ funds generally may not be used for projects that result in the construction of new capacity available to SOVs (single occupant vehicles).

Consensus Process A collaborative decision-making process in which a large group, broadly representative of the widest possible range of opinion on an issue, meet in large and small groups to identify issues and reach decisions reflective of all the interests represented.

Context Sensitive Solution (CSS) A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist.

Design Standards Standards that are met when a new road is constructed, or when a deficient section is improved. These standards pertain to all relevant geometric and structural features required to provide a desired level of service over the life of the project. The life of the project is generally 20 years beyond its implementation.

Environmental Assessments (EA) Prepared for federal actions under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) where it is not clearly known how significant the environmental impact might be. If, after preparing an environmental assessment, it is determined that the project impact is significant, an Environmental Impact Statement

(EIS) is then prepared. If not, a "finding of no significant impact" (FONSI) is documented.

Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) Prepared for federal actions that have a significant effect on the human and natural environment. These are disclosure documents prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that provide a full description of the proposed project, the existing environment and analysis of the anticipated beneficial and adverse environmental effects of all reasonable alternatives. There are various stages — Draft EIS and Final EIS.

Environmental Justice (EJ) Environmental justice assures that services and benefits allow for meaningful participation and are fairly distributed to avoid discrimination.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) The federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing federal environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act and others. EPA is the source agency of air quality control regulations affecting transportation.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid Highway Program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads and bridges.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that is the principal source of federal financial assistance to America's communities for planning, development and improvement of public or mass transportation systems.

Financial Planning The process of defining and evaluating funding sources, sharing the information and deciding how to allocate the funds.

Financial Programming A short-term commitment of funds to specific projects identified in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (see TIP).

Fiscal or Financial Constraint Making sure that a given program or project can reasonably expect to receive funding within the time allotted for its implementation.

Forum A public meeting in which a panel presents divergent opinions on an issue, followed by a public discussion either as questions and answers or in small group discussions with reporting to the larger group

Geographic Information System (GIS) Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze and display geographically referenced information.

High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Vehicles carrying two or more people. The number that constitutes an HOV for the purposes of HOV highway lanes may be designated differently by different transportation agencies.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) the application of advanced technologies to improve the efficiency and safety of transportation systems.

Intermodal The ability to connect and the connections between modes of transportation.

Level of Service (LOS) a qualitative rating of how well a unit of transportation supply (e.g. street, intersection, bikeway, etc) serves its current or projected demand. LOS A = free-flow condition (32 percent of capacity); B = reasonably free-flow conditions (51 percent); C = operation stable but becoming more critical (75 percent); D = lower speed range of stable flow (92 percent); E = unstable flow (100 percent); F = forced flow; >100 percent of capacity, stop-and-go operation.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) The official intermodal transportation plan developed and adopted thorough the metropolitan transportation planning process for the metropolitan planning area which provides guidance in the development of an efficient transportation system over a period of 20 years.

Maintenance Area Maintenance area is any geographic region of the United States previously designated non-attainment pursuant to the CAA Amendments of 1990 and subsequently re- designated to attainment subject to the requirement to develop a maintenance plan under section 175A of the CAA, as amended.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) An MPO is a planning agency established by federal law to assure a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process takes place that results in the development of plans, programs and projects that consider all transportation modes and supports the goals of the community. Any urbanized area or contiguous urbanized areas, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, containing a population of greater than 50,000 are required to have an MPO. ROCOG is the MPO for Rochester and Olmsted County.

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) The State agency that manages the highway system within Minnesota. MnDOT's mission is to plan, implement, maintain and manage an integrated transportation system for the movement of people and products, with emphasis on quality, safety, efficiency and the environment for citizens. MnDOT is the administrative agency that responds to policy set by the Minnesota Legislation.

Mode, Intermodal, Multimodal Form of transportation, such as automobile, transit, bicycle and walking. Intermodal refers to the connections between modes and multimodal refers to the availability of transportation options within a system or corridor.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) An established national environmental policy requiring that any project using federal funding or requiring federal approval, including transportation projects, examine the effects of proposed and alternative choices on the environment before a federal decision is made.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Law requiring federal agencies to consider the potential effect of a project on a property that is registered on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. If effects are identified, federal and state agencies and the public must identify means to mitigate the harm.

Non-Attainment Any geographic area that has not met the requirements for clean air as set out in the Clean Air Act of 1990. An area can at the same time be classified as in attainment for one or more air pollutants and as a non-attainment area for another air pollutant.

Open House A poster session providing an opportunity for distributed question and answer exchanges and for direct recording of citizen concerns

Paratransit Alternative known as "special or specialized" transportation, which often includes flexibly scheduled and routed transportation services. These services use low capacity vehicles such as vans to operate within normal urban transit corridors or rural areas. Services usually cater to the needs of persons whom standard mass transit services would serve with difficulty, or not at all. Common patrons are the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Planning Funds (PL) Primary source of funding for metropolitan planning designated by the FHWA.

Public Hearing A more or less formal public meeting hosted by the project oversight committee at which testimony for the record is submitted. In the ROCOG area, public hearings are still fairly informal.

Public Information Meeting An informal public meeting hosted by the project oversight committee featuring a presentation followed by an opportunity for public questions (which are answered if possible) and other testimony

Right-of-Way (ROW) Public space legally established for the use of pedestrians, vehicles, or utilities. Right-of-way typically includes the street, sidewalk and buffer strip areas.

Rural Planning Organization (RPO) An organization similar to an MPO, composed of representatives of rural local governments and appointed representatives from the geographic area covered by the organization with the purpose of involving local officials in multi-modal transportation planning through a structured process.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the five-year period 2005-2009.

Sample Survey A questionnaire administered to a large group of citizens selected scientifically so as to be representative of the population of citizens of interest. ROPD surveys (whether by mail or phone) typically have response rates ranging from 50% to 75%.

Stakeholders Individuals and organizations involved in or affected by the transportation planning process. Include federal/state/local officials, MPOs, transit operators, freight companies, shippers, and the general public.

Surface Transportation Program (STP) Federal-aid highway funding program that funds a broad range of surface transportation capital needs, including many roads, transit, sea and airport access, vanpool, bike and pedestrian facilities.

Task Force An advisory committee established for a defined term for a specific purpose, after which accomplishing the committee is disbanded.

Title VI Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The legislation prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance.

Transportation Conformity Process to assess the compliance of any transportation plan, program, or project with air quality implementation plans. The conformity process is defined by the Clean Air Act.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) "Demand-based" techniques that are designed to change travel behavior in order to improve the performance of transportation facilities and to reduce the need for additional road capacity. Methods include the use of alternative modes, ride-sharing and vanpool programs and trip-reduction programs and/or ordinances.

Transportation Disadvantaged Persons potentially under-served by the transportation system are identified in the SAFETEA-LU planning regulations as those

individuals who have difficulty in obtaining transportation because of their age, income, physical or mental disability. This includes, but is not limited to, low-income and minority households. Persons who are unable to own and/or operate a private automobile (e.g., youth, the elderly and the disabled) also may be included in this category.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) A staged, multiyear (typically three to five years) listing of surface transportation projects proposed for federal, state and local funding within a metropolitan area. MPOs are required to prepare a TIP as a short-range programming document to complement its long range transportation plan. The TIP contains projects with committed funds over a multiyear period (five years).

Transportation Management Area (TMA) All urbanized areas over 200,000 in population and any other area that requests such designation. The MPO is responsible for transportation planning with a TMA.

Transportation Planning A collaborative process of examining demographic characteristics and travel patterns for a given area. This process shows how these characteristics will change over a given period of time and evaluates alternatives for the transportation system of the area and the most expeditious use of local, state and federal transportation funding. Long range planning is typically done over a period of 25 years; short-range programming of specific projects usually covers a period of 3 to 5 years.

Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) The management plan for the (metropolitan) planning program. Its purpose is to coordinate the planning activities of all participants in the planning process.

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) A standing committee established by ROCOG with wide representation of local and state transportation planners, engineers, and transit operators who provide technical input regarding transportation plans and programs and make recommendations to the ROCOG Policy Board.

Urbanized Area An area that contains a city of 50,000 or more population plus incorporated surrounding areas meeting size or density criteria as defined by the U.S. Census.

Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) The sum of distances traveled by all motor vehicles in a specified region.

APPENDIX C: Public Comments and ROCOG responses during the 45-day comment period for this document.

The public comment period ran from March 31 to May 15, 2019. The comments received consisted of those from staff at MnDOT staff at the Central Office and those comments were incorporated into this document prior to this finalization. The document from MnDOT showing comments is available by contacting ROCOG staff at 507.328.7100.