

Oshkosh Transit – Transit Development Plan (TDP) Public Participation Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to establish procedures that allow for, encourage, and monitor participation of all citizens in the Oshkosh Transit System service area, including but not limited to low income and minority individuals, and those with limited English proficiency. While traditional means of soliciting public involvement may not reach such individuals, or might not allow for meaningful avenues of input, the intent of this effort is to take reasonable actions throughout the planning process to provide opportunities for historically under-served populations to participate.

This document will lay out procedures to provide opportunities for all area citizens to participate in the development of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the Oshkosh Transit System. The TDP is a short range plan (roughly 5 years) which analyzes all aspects of transit operations. Where appropriate, recommendations are made to improve these aspects of transit operations.

A notice will be posted in the local newspaper, noting the existence of this public participation plan and a copy of the public participation plan will be sent, at a minimum, to the stakeholders identified in Appendix A.

Goals and Objectives for the Public Participation Plan

Goal: The goal of the PPP is to offer real opportunities for the engagement of all citizens of the Oshkosh Transit System service area to participate in the development of a Transit Development Plan (TDP).

Objectives:

- To determine what non-English languages and other cultural barriers exist to public participation within the Oshkosh area.
- To provide a general notification of meetings, particularly forums for public input, in a manner that is understandable to all populations in the area.
- To hold meetings in locations which are accessible and reasonably welcoming to all area residents, including, but not limited to, low-income and minority members of the public.
- To provide avenues for two way flow of information and input from populations which are not likely to attend meetings.
- To provide a framework of actions appropriate to various types of plans and programs, as well as amendments or alterations to any such plan or program.
- To use various illustrative visualization techniques to convey the information including but not limited to charts, graphs, photos, maps and the internet.

Identification of Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those who are either directly, or indirectly, affected by a plan, or the recommendations of that plan. Those who may be adversely affected, or who may be denied benefit of a plan's recommendation(s), are of particular interest in the identification of specific

stakeholders. Stakeholders are broken down into several groups: general citizens, minority and low-income persons, public agencies, and private organizations and businesses.

General Citizens: There are 71,064 residents in the Oshkosh Urbanized Area (U.S. Census, 2000). Over 93 percent of the population of the urbanized area consider themselves to be of solely of a white race. Over 99 percent of the households have someone over the age of 14 who speaks English, with 92 percent speaking only English in the home.

Some of the techniques that can be used to engage the general population are public notices of meetings in the local newspaper, open house format public information meetings. While these techniques will continue, staff will make a greater effort to engage the general public, possibly with techniques such as, nominal group exercises, surveys, use of local news media, etc.

Minorities: Minority populations make up a fairly small percentage of the population in the Oshkosh urbanized area. (See Table 1.) Persons of Asian races make up the largest minority, with just over 2.5 percent of the total population of the urbanized area. Hispanic and Black persons account for 2.01 percent and 1.81 percent of the population, respectively. There are also a small number of American Indian/Alaska native (0.5 percent) and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander individuals (0.02 percent). Persons who consider themselves to be of more than one race account for just over 1 percent of the population.

Engaging minority, and low-English proficiency populations can be challenging. Language and cultural differences may not be compatible with the more traditional means of engaging the public in the planning process. The Oshkosh Transit – Transit Development Plan Steering Committee will make reasonable efforts to engage minority populations using techniques, such as including notations in public notices in appropriate non-English languages that will provide a contact where the individual can be informed of the process/project, and will have the opportunity to give input. Focus groups may also be established for the purpose of gaining input from a particular defined portion of the community. Also, advocacy groups can be a good resource for contacts and dissemination of information to minority and low-English proficiency populations. Such advocacy groups or agencies can have insight into the needs of the under-represented populations, as well as providing valuable contacts or arenas for input. Contacts with local translators should also be maintained, and used as requested and needed.

TABLE 1
Oshkosh Urbanized Area Population

Oshkosh urbanized area - Race

Category	Number	Percent of Pop.
Total	71,064	100.00%
Total one race	70,253	98.86%
White	66,228	93.19%
Black	1,284	1.81%
American Indian/Alaska native	354	0.50%
Asian	1,821	2.56%
Hawaiian & Pac. Islander	14	0.02%
Other	552	0.78%
Two or more races	811	1.14%
Hispanic	1,431	2.01%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.

Low-income: Low income households, those under 150 percent of the local poverty level, account for over 17 percent of all households in the urbanized area, and 9.3 percent of the population were actually below the local poverty level, based on 1999 incomes. Low income populations of the Oshkosh urbanized area should be given every reasonable opportunity to provide input on transportation plans and programs, to avoid disproportionate harm, or lack of benefit, of transportation programs and projects.

While low-income individuals may have access to all of the traditional means of public involvement, discussed under "general public", they may be less likely to become involved, or offer input. Some methods of gaining input either directly or indirectly from this portion of the population include focus groups, informal interviews, and agency/advocacy group contacts.

Public Agencies: Public agencies can provide valuable input to the planning process, in addition to assisting in gaining participation from traditionally under-represented populations. Pertinent public agencies include those that have clients who fall into under-represented populations, including but not limited to minorities, low-income, and limited English proficiency households. These agencies have great insight into the transportation needs of their clients and are useful partners in overcoming difficult barriers that may not be understood by professionals dealing more distinctly with the provision of transportation services.

Private Organizations and Businesses: Private organizations and businesses offer a number of perspectives that are valuable to the planning process. Often, transportation for employees is of critical concern to private sector employers. For that reason, representation of private business interests will be welcomed in the planning process.

Public Participation Plan

This document, upon its adoption, is to serve as the PPP for the Oshkosh Transit –Transit Development Plan Steering Committee. Availability of the policy for review will be advertised in a manner reasonably expected to reach the general public, as well as minority populations, low-income persons, and other traditionally under-served populations. This could occur through contacts mentioned earlier in this document, notification of contacts available in English, Spanish, and Hmong languages, in addition to traditional public notices in local newspapers. A preliminary schedule of the planning process is included in Table 2.

Public involvement is important at all stages of plan development. Opportunities for participation for both users and nonusers of the Oshkosh Transit System will be available. Both an onboard survey and a nonuser survey are scheduled for implementation throughout this process. A public input/comment period on the draft plan is also tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2011. A notice will be posted in the local newspaper. People can also obtain information about the process from, or submit input to, both the Oshkosh Transit System and the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (lead agency in the plan development process).

Oshkosh Transit
926 Dempsey Trail
Oshkosh, WI 54902
Phone: (920) 232-5340
Fax: (920) 232-5343
Contact: Chris Strong, Transportation Director - CStrong@ci.oshkosh.wi.us

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
400 Ahnaip Street, Suite 100
Menasha, WI 54952
Phone: (920) 751-4770
Fax: (920) 751-4771
Contact: Jason Kakatsch, Principal Transportation Planner – jkakatsch@eastcentralrpc.org

Other stages of the planning process, such as reviewing draft documents and mapping, are more conducive to other techniques. Documents are available for review at Oshkosh Transit Offices, located at 926 Dempsey Trail in Oshkosh, and on the Oshkosh Transit System’s website listed below:

www.oshkoshtransit.com

If materials are requested in Spanish, Hmong, large type and/or Braille, staff will make a reasonable attempt to accommodate those needs. Other techniques could also be determined to be useful at any particular stage of the process, and new and different techniques will be utilized as deemed appropriate.

**TABLE 2
Oshkosh Transit System – Transit Development Plan (TDP) Timeline**

Oshkosh Transit Development Plan (TDP) Timeline	January-10	February-10	March-10	April-10	May-10	June-10	July-10	August-10	September-10	October-10	November-10	December-10	January-11	February-11	March-11	April-11	May-11	June-11
OTS Overview/Data Collection																		
Mapping																		
Transit Model Route/System Analysis and Alternative Testing (HNTB subcontract)																		
Steering Committee Kickoff - OTS Overview, Plan Goals and Objectives, Issue Identification, Public Participation Plan, Survey Development		SC																
Posting and Distribution of the Public Participation Plan																		
Public Participation and Input																		
Oshkosh Transit Staff Input/Survey																		
Stakeholder Interviews																		
On-board Survey/Boarding and Alighting Counts																		
Steering Committee - Mapping, OTS Staff Input/Survey, Stakeholder Interviews, Onboard Survey and Boarding and Alighting Count Update, Transit Model					SC													
Survey/Boarding and Alighting Analysis																		
System Accessibility Analysis																		
Steering Committee - Survey/Boarding and Alighting Results, Nonuser Survey Development and Stakeholder Identification, System Accessibility								SC										
Nonuser Survey Implementation and Analysis																		
Peer Analysis/Evaluation of Performance																		
Steering Committee - Nonuser Survey Results/Peer Analysis/Evaluation of Performance											SC							
Plan Development																		
Steering Committee - Review of Draft Plan/Transit Model Testing Analysis/Final Recommendations														SC				
Plan Updates																		
Steering Committee - Public Hearing and Plan Adoption																	SC	
Plan Production and Distribution																		

Outreach Efforts

In addition to the outreach efforts identified earlier in this policy, staff will use the following techniques during its planning studies, as deemed appropriate by staff and the Oshkosh Transit – Transit Development Plan Steering Committee:

- Presentations to professional, citizen, and student organizations.
- Articles in community newsletters.
- Press releases and meetings with local media representatives.
- Informal conversations with individuals and small groups.
- Interviews with people who are or could be affected by study recommendations.
- Presentations by experts on various transit-related subjects.
- User and non-user surveys.
- Use various illustrative visualization techniques to convey the information including but not limited to charts, graphs, photos, maps and the internet.

Other techniques will be examined to determine the best methods of involving all segments of the service area population in the planning process.

Availability of Planning Documents: Hard copies of documents, upon completion, will be available at the Oshkosh Transit Office, located at 926 Dempsey Trail in Oshkosh. Electronic versions of the documents will be available on the Oshkosh Transit System’s website.

www.oshkoshtransit.com

Methods of Addressing Comments: Comments will be documented, presented to decision-making bodies, modified in the contents of the document as necessary, and will be included in the appendices of planning products after they are approved and published. Comments received after studies and other planning products are completed and approved will be documented and referenced when amending or updating the planning products in the future.

Responses to Information Requests and Comments: Information can be requested from staff in person and by phone, fax, e-mail, and U.S. mail.

Appendix A

Public Participation Plan Contact List

ADVOCAP, Inc.
American Red Cross
Cabulance
Chamco, Inc.
City of Oshkosh Community Development Dept.
City of Oshkosh Parks Dept.
City of Oshkosh Public Library
Fox Valley Technical College
Goodwill Industries, Inc.
Greyhound Bus Lines
League of Women Voters
Oshkosh Housing Authority
Oshkosh Parochial Schools
Oshkosh Public Schools
Oshkosh Senior Center
Salvation Army
Town of Algoma
Town of Black Wolf
Town of Nekimi
Town of Omro
Town of Oshkosh
Unified Catholic Schools of Oshkosh
United Way
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh
Winnebago County Sheriff's Dept.
Winnebago County, Human Services Dept.