

Public Participation Process

Getting early input from the citizens of Nevada who use our transportation system was a key component in the update of this Plan. And that input has helped shape the long-term policies and strategies within this Plan. In 2004, NDOT began an extensive public involvement process (See Figure B - Public Participation Time-Line). Our objective was to identify, quantify, and evaluate the issues of importance to our transportation system users. Public involvement fosters an open decision-making process and elicits active participation from affected individuals, groups, and communities.

Federal Regulations

With the passage of the new federal highway bill, Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU), the following requirements were enacted for the Statewide Long-Range Plan. Key audiences that states must provide a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed Plan include: 1) citizens, 2) affected public agencies, 3) representatives of public transportation employees, 4) freight shippers and providers of freight transportation services, 5) private providers of transportation, 6) representative of users of public transportation, 7) representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, 8) representatives of the disabled, 9) other interested parties.

Under the guidance of CFR 450.210 (Interested parties, public involvement, and consultation) when providing consultation to non-metropolitan transportation officials and in providing opportunities for comment, the State's public involvement process at a minimum shall:

(i) Establish early and continuous public involvement opportunities that provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes;

(ii) Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information;

(iii) Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points;

(iv) To the maximum extent practicable, ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and times;

(v) To the maximum extent practicable, use visualization techniques to describe the proposed Plan;

(vi) To the maximum extent practicable, make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford a reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information;

(vii) Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input during the development of the Plan;

(viii) Include a process for 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;

(ix) Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate.

Public Outreach Strategies

The first step in NDOT's public outreach process was to meet with the Statewide Technical Transportation Committee (STTAC). The STTAC was formed by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) in 1991 with the passage of ISTEA, specifically to fulfill one element of that law and provide a forum for discussing statewide planning and programming issues. This includes reviewing and providing input on the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan. The STTAC meets on a bi-monthly basis. Their meetings are open to the

public and posted in conformance with Nevada’s Open Meeting Law (See Appendix D for a complete description of Nevada Revised Statute - Chapter 241). The STTAC includes representatives from:

VOTING MEMBERSHIP

- Nevada State Parks
- Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
- Nevada Office of Traffic Safety
- Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada
- Washoe County Regional Transportation Commission
- Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Nevada Department of Environmental Protection
- Nevada Association of Counties
- Nevada League of Cities
- Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Clark County
- Henderson
- Las Vegas
- North Las Vegas
- Reno
- Sparks
- Washoe County
- Nevada Bicycle Advisory Board
- Nevada Aviation Technical Advisory Committee
- Nevada Transit Technical Advisory Committee
- Nevada Energy Office
- Nevada Commission on Tourism
- Nevada Commission on Economic Development

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP

- Federal Highway Administration
- Bureau of Land Management
- Nevada Department of Transportation (staff)

The STTAC was advised that staff was beginning a major update of the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan and their input was requested. Staff continued meeting with the STTAC on an ongoing basis throughout the development of this Plan giving them updates

and an opportunity to provide input and guidance.

During 2004, after the initial update to the STTAC, staff held a series of 8 public meetings across the state of Nevada to give the public an early opportunity to provide input on the issues that affect them. The purpose of these meetings was to inform the public that NDOT was beginning an update of the 2002 Plan and to solicit input. The meetings were advertised in the local newspapers for each area across the state and posted in conformance with Nevada’s Open Meeting Law. Each meeting had a stenographer available if any members of the public wanted to utilize their services. Special exhibits were displayed during the meetings to convey various aspects of the Plan and staff members were present to answer questions. Handouts describing the Plan, a brochure and comment form were also provided.

Public meetings were held at the following locations:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
August 18	Carson City
August 24	Reno
September 28	Elko
September 29	Ely
October 12	Henderson
October 13	Las Vegas
November 3	Tonopah
November 9	Winnemucca

Staff was disappointed in the number of people who participated in these public meetings so we took a look at our process and decided that we needed to try new and creative methods to solicit more input from the public. Staff decided that instead of asking the public to come to us, we would go to them as much as we could. Staff began participating on corridor studies, attending county economic development workshops and looking for ways to piggyback our Plan at other public meetings. Staff also

started attending the annual County / tribal tours and workshops throughout Nevada where the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program is presented. At first staff attended these meetings to listen and gain insight on the issues that the local communities were facing. But every year staff has incorporated more and more information about the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan into these meetings.

In 2006, staff implemented a survey that could be completed online through the NDOT website or by a paper hard copy. Staff also initiated an extensive advertising campaign for that survey that included the development of a logo and a brochure (see advertisements following Figure B in this Appendix). The brochure was inserted into 30,000 driver’s license renewal envelopes. Advertisements for the survey were also placed in a special edition of the Hot August Nights (classic car show in Reno, NV) newspaper and the Nevada Magazine. The brochures were displayed at our NDOT District Offices in Las Vegas, Elko and Reno. In addition, the brochure and logo flyers have been and continue to be handed out at meetings attended by staff, such as the Reno Championship Air Races, the National Association of Management Airports (NAMA) conference, and the Rural Planning Conference. This effort has been very successful in soliciting comments and providing input to this Plan with over 500 surveys received (See Appendix C).

In June 2006, NDOT held a two-day workshop with representatives from the STTAC, MPO’s, cities, counties, and various state agencies to introduce them to the new requirements of SAFETEA-LU in development of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, Transportation Improvement Program, Regional Transportation Program, and the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan. During that meeting staff also solicited input from these agencies for the Plan and advised them that we would be meeting with them at a

later date to solicit more input. In addition, throughout 2007 staff met individually with over 20 state and federal agencies to gather input from a diverse representation of various transportation interests and comply with the law. Each assisted with identifying key issues and concerns they are facing and that NDOT will need to address in the next 20 years.

Individuals from the following agencies and organizations were invited to meet with NDOT staff to discuss their concerns and interests in transportation related issues:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Mines
- Commission on Economic Development
- Commission on Tourism
- Department of Energy
- Department of Business and Industry
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Wildlife
- Division of Minerals
- Division of Water Resources
- Federal Motor Carrier Association
- Gaming Control Board
- Intertribal Council
- Muscle Power
- Natural Resources and Conservation
- Nevada Association of Counties
- Nevada Department of Environmental Protection
- Nevada Fish & Wildlife
- Nevada League of Cities
- Nevada Motor Transport Association
- Nevada Natural Heritage
- Office of Traffic Safety
- State Demographer
- State Historic Preservation Office
- State Lands
- State Parks
- Tribal Technical Assistance Program
- US Forest Service

There are four designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO’s) in Nevada:

Carson City, Clark County, Lake Tahoe, and Washoe County. These MPO's have the primary stewardship for transportation planning within their boundaries, including member cities and surrounding unincorporated areas. However, it is critical that NDOT coordinate and cooperate with the MPO's as we plan for the future of our transportation system. In 2007, staff began attending MPO monthly liaison meetings and worked closely with them during the development of their Regional Transportation Improvement Plans and Regional Transportation Plans.

NDOT acquires additional information about area needs, issues and expectations by consulting with the public in many different ways. Staff participates in corridor studies and National Environmental Policy Act documents, attends meetings with committees representing specific interests, such as freight and non-motorized travel, and attends various transportation fairs. Each of these public involvement efforts provides information that NDOT uses to gain insight into the needs and priorities of the rural and small urban areas of our state.

Through the National Environmental Policy Act, NDOT's Environmental Division is responsible for undertaking, complying and documenting activities related to NEPA. Per 23 CFR 771, specific public involvement activities relating to highway projects that use federal money are described. These federal regulations provide for early and continuous public involvement.

A final draft of this Plan was completed in June 2008 and staff began the concluding public outreach efforts. Again, the first step was to distribute a copy of the draft plan to the advisory committee -- the STTAC at their bimonthly meeting.

A copy of the draft Plan was placed on the NDOT website in July, and public input and comments were solicited. The Plan was also featured on the NDOT home page for two weeks during August. Advertisements seeking input on the plan were placed in 19 different newspapers around the state two times during the month of August. The public was directed to go to the NDOT website to view the Plan and were also able to write or place a telephone call for a copy and provide comments.

During July and August, staff attended the Board meetings at the four MPO's (Carson City, Clark County, Lake Tahoe, and Washoe County) in our urban areas, to discuss the Plan and solicit input. Prior to meetings with these Boards, staff met with their advisory committees -- the Washoe County Technical Advisory Committee, the Clark County Economic Advisory Committee and the Tahoe Transportation Commission. All of these meetings were publicly noticed in conformance with Nevada's Open Meeting Law (See Appendix D for a complete description of Nevada Revised Statute - Chapter 241) and were televised on the local public network stations or recorded. Outreach to minority publications is also an element of their public advertisement procedure.

In August 2008, NDOT staff held two additional public meetings in Elko and Ely to introduce the Plan and solicit public comments in the rural areas of the state. These meetings were advertised in the local newspapers in accordance with Nevada's open meeting laws. Senior Centers, bicycle advocacy groups, Assemblymen, libraries, transit recipients and NDOT District Offices were also sent meeting notices. Press releases announcing the meetings, availability of the draft Plan, and soliciting comments were also sent to two editors at the Elko daily newspaper, four journalists at the Elko NBC TV station (including community calendar), as well as three different radio

stations. The Ely release was sent to the two Ely radio stations, and the editor and reporter at the Ely newspaper. The meetings were also posted on the NDOT website.

Special exhibits were displayed during the public meetings to convey various aspects of the Plan and staff members were present to answer questions. Handouts describing the Plan, a brochure and comment form were also provided.



The deadline for comments on the Plan was set for September 15, 2008. After that, the Plan was finalized and completed by September 30, 2008. The Plan went before the STTAC for endorsement in August and before the State Transportation Board on September 16, 2008. It was adopted by the Director of the Department of Transportation on September 30, 2008. It was then mailed to the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration for informational purposes only as required under CFR 450.214.

FIGURE A

STATEWIDE LONG-RANGE PLAN – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

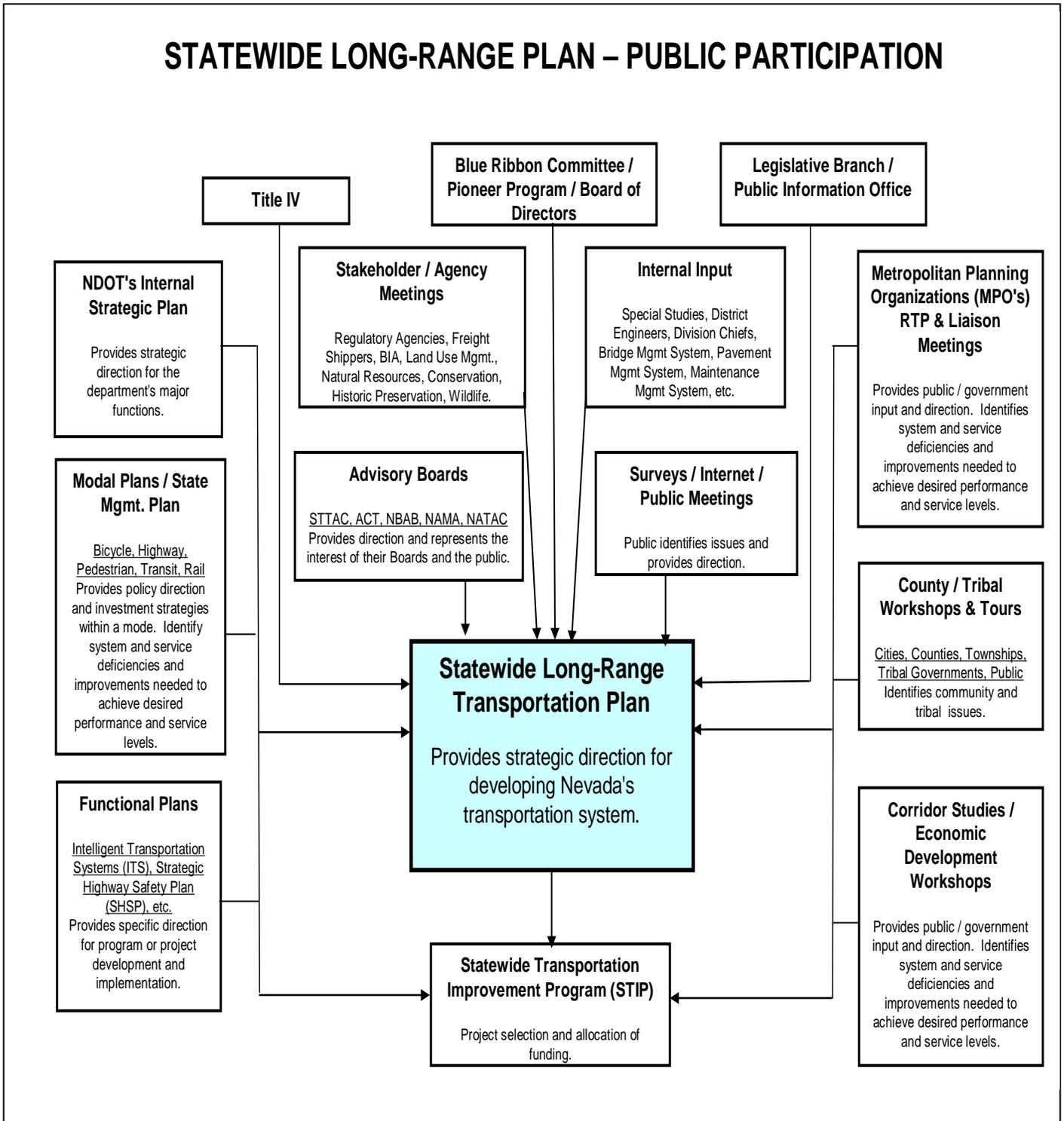


FIGURE B

STATEWIDE LONG RANGE PLAN - PUBLIC OUTREACH

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
Pre-Draft Outreach					
STTAC Advisory Committee	On-Going				
Public Meetings	Aug. – Nov.				
County/Tribal Tours & Workshops		Nov. - July	Nov. - July	Nov. - July	Nov. - July
Corridor Studies				On-Going	
On-Line Survey				On-Going	
Local/State/Federal/MPO/Tribal Workshop			June		
MPO Monthly Liaison Meetings				On-Going	
Individual Meetings State/Federal/Tribal				Jan – Dec.	
Final Draft Outreach					
Draft to STTAC Advisory Committee					June – Oct.
Draft Document on Website					June – Sept.
Draft at MPOs & Public Meetings					July - August
Document Finalized					September