

Mount Rogers Planning District Commission

Public Input Plan (PIP)

The transportation network has a direct impact on all the citizens of our region. It is important that they have a say in its planning and development. Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC) and the localities it represents believe in the value of an informed citizenry and the importance of input from a broad base of stakeholders. This document is intended to guide the public participation procedure for the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission in relation to the production and eventual adoption of a *Rural Regional Long Range Transportation Plan*.

Who we are: The Mount Rogers Planning District Commission is a regional planning agency as authorized under the Virginia Area Development Act of 1968, as amended. The Commission serves local governments in the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe and the independent cities of Bristol, Virginia and Galax. The Commission is made up of 38 persons appointed by the local governments in the jurisdictions named above, plus the 12 incorporated towns in the region: Abingdon, Chilhowie, Damascus, Glade Spring, Fries, Hillsville, Independence, Marion, Rural Retreat, Saltville, Troutdale, and Wytheville.

Purpose of PIP: Public participation is meaningful only if the process is open and continuous. It is a process of opening up a dialogue between transportation decision makers and their staff and those stakeholders who will be impacted by any changes (or lack there of) within the transportation system. The following is a representative sample of potential participants: the general public; low income, minority and disabled communities; neighborhood representatives; business leaders and chambers of commerce; specialized transportation interests; local officials; and federal and state transportation agencies. Input will be encouraged and maximized by tailoring efforts to the task at hand and utilizing the most appropriate method of outreach.

The MRPDC Public Input Plan includes the following elements:

Involvement Opportunities

Listening Sessions for facilitated data gathering will be held routinely from the beginning of the planning process to gather ideas and information.

Public Input Meetings will be held toward the end of each planning phase to gain feedback and opinions on specific policy statements, maps or documents.

- All listening sessions and public input meetings will be held after adequate notice (non-legal newspaper advertisement at least fourteen days prior to the meeting), at times and locations convenient to potential participants including accommodations for the disabled.

- Further participation and comment on related transportation matters can be made at affiliated meetings such as MRPDC member jurisdiction monthly meetings (Boards of Supervisors, Planning Commissions, etc.) and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Bristol and Salem Construction District meetings, particularly the Six Year Improvement Program public meetings.

Communication and Information

- All meetings, events and documents will be announced, then made available on the MRPDC website (which also contains staff contact information.)
- All documents, draft and adopted, will be available for inspection at the MRPDC office.
- Mount Rogers maintains a toll-free phone number for all citizens in the district.
- When appropriate, the local television and/or radio Public Service Announcement systems will be utilized to announce participation opportunities.
- When particular stakeholders are identified, announcements regarding participation opportunities will be made at relevant local community organization meetings.
- Flyers will be created for distribution at local libraries and posting on community bulletin boards as necessary.
- The MRPDC website will link to jurisdictional and relevant organizational websites to provide information and expand outreach.

Response

- Input will be reviewed, summarized and analyzed. Responses to suggestions made through any of the above channels will be integrated into the final document or included as an addendum. This process is iterative, meaning, it will be repeated as needed to address all concerns voiced.
- Once all phases of the original plan are complete, a final draft will be circulated to member localities for a majority vote. Upon adoption, the *Rural Regional Long Range Plan* will be revisited every five years {or sooner, depending on candidate projects for inclusion in each fiscal cycle of the SYIP) for update.

Committees

- The RLTP Rural Technical Committee (RTC) was formed in October 2006 as required by VDOT. Its members constitute the point of contact for each of Mount Rogers' localities, including elected officials. See Appendix A to review the RTC by-laws.
- The Mount Rogers Planning District Commission will review and adopt all final documents after member jurisdictions have given their consideration to them.

Adopted October ____, 2007

Adopted November ____, 2007

 Stephen D. Bear, Chair
 MRPDC Rural Technical Committee

 Kenneth O. Reynolds, Chair
 MRPDC

References

Central Shenandoah Planning District, “Rural Regional Transportation Planning Initiative, Public Participation Plan,” 2007

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), “Public Involvement, Goals and Objectives,” www.virginiadot.org

West Piedmont Planning District Public Involvement/Participation Plan, 2007

Winchester-Frederick County (WIN-FRED) Metropolitan Planning Organization, “Public Involvement Plan,” 2005

Appendix A

BY-LAWS TRANSPORTATION RURAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MOUNT ROGERS PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

ARTICLE I – NAME

Section 1. The name of the Committee shall be the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Transportation Rural Technical Committee, hereinafter referred to as the “Committee.” It shall be the official transportation review body of the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Executive Committee, hereinafter referred to as the “Executive Committee.”

ARTICLE II – PURPOSES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Section 1.** The purposes and responsibilities of the Committee shall be:
- a) To serve as the liaison for their jurisdiction on transportation-related issues and concerns.
 - b) To review, evaluate, and determine their jurisdiction’s transportation priorities in the context of the preparation and ongoing updating of the Rural Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan (in conjunction with local officials, VDOT District representatives and MRPDC staff, as required) for the Executive Committee.
 - c) To work with Commission staff and Executive Director to make periodic reports to the Executive Committee, summarizing the Committee’s interests, ideas, concerns, etc.

- d) To make recommendations to the Executive Committee each year, as to the Planning District's Regional Transportation Priorities, to be submitted at the Commonwealth Transportation Board's Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) Public Hearings.

Section 2. The Committee, at the direction of the Commission or Executive Committee, shall not perform any other acts and functions, inconsistent with these By-laws or with the By-laws of the Commission.

***ARTICLE III – RELATIONSHIP TO THE
MOUNT ROGERS PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION***

Section 1. Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Member's jurisdiction in accordance with the following provisions:

- a) The membership shall include one representative from each of the eight eligible local jurisdictions, which includes the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe and the Cities of Bristol and Galax.
- b) The membership shall include one alternate representative from each of the eight eligible jurisdictions. The Alternate will represent the primary member in their absence and will have full voting privileges.
- c) In order to stagger terms, four Committee members shall be appointed initially for a one-year term, while four shall be appointed for two-year terms. Upon expiration of all first terms, a two-year term shall apply to all Committee members. Members may be

reappointed upon expiration of a term. The terms shall commence on January of the year, and expire on December 31. A vacancy on the Committee shall be filled for the unexpired term through appointment by the Member's jurisdiction.

- d) In addition to the above, membership shall also include a representative of the Virginia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Virginia Aviation, and Department of Rail and Public Transit to serve the Committee as ex-officio advisors.

Section 2. Membership qualifications and restrictions are as follows:

- a) Committee shall represent the entire region served by the Commission and shall serve in the best interests of the entire region. Membership qualification shall be without regard to age, race, color, creed, national origin, disability, or sex.
- b) Committee members should be knowledgeable in the area of transportation or intensive transportation-related service operations. Membership may include, but not be limited to transportation personnel, law enforcement, education, emergency services, trucking/special delivery, and others with expertise in transportation. All efforts shall be made to avoid appointing two Committee members from the same organization or firm. In no

event, shall there be three Committee members from the same organization or firm.

- c) Members shall receive no salary, but shall be reimbursed for necessary travel and other expenses incurred in the performance of their duties by the Commission. Such reimbursement shall be set by the Commission.

Section 3. Commission staff members shall be assigned by the Executive Director of the Commission to serve the Committee in a staff capacity, with the Executive Director and staff ex-officio.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1. The Committee shall elect from its membership a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman at its first meeting in January of each year. A Commission staff member appointed by the Executive Director will serve as a Secretary for the Committee. The term of the office for Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be one year. No person may serve more than two consecutive terms in the office of Chairman, or in the office of Vice-Chairman.

Section 2. The duties of the Chairman shall be:

- a) To preside at all meetings of the Committee.
- b) To perform any other powers and duties consistent with these By-laws as may be assigned to him/her by the Committee.

Section 3. The duties of the Vice-Chairman shall be, in the absence of the Chairman, or in the even of his/her inability to act, or if that office is temporarily

vacant, to exercise all of the powers and to perform all of the duties of the Chairman.

Section 4. The duties of the Secretary shall be:

- a) To keep the minutes of all meetings of the Committee, recording the decisions and recommendations. A report of each meeting shall be prepared and distributed to the Committee members.
- b) To present the report from the Committee to the Executive Committee at its next meeting.
- c) To give and serve all notices of meetings of the Committee.
- d) To perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary, including the preparation of all reports of the Committee and such other duties as may be requested by the Committee and approved by the Executive Director.

Section 5. A vacancy in the offices of Chairman or Vice-Chairman shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the Committee at any regular meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Section 1. The meeting schedule for the Committee.

- a) The Committee shall have the power to set the date, place, and time of regular meetings of the Committee, if so desired. Committee meetings may be called on an “as needed” basis by the Committee Secretary, Chairman, or the Executive Director.

Section 2. Notice of time, place, and purpose of all meetings of the Committee shall be by mail, email, or telephone, but in no case shall notice be less than five days, unless agreed upon by all members of the Committee.

Section 3. A quorum shall consist of a majority of all members for any meeting for which at least five days advance written notice has been provided.

Section 4. Each member of the Committee shall be entitled to **one** vote, unless a conflict of interest occurs that disallows their participation. All actions, except amendments to these By-laws, taken by the Committee shall require a majority vote of those voting members present at any meeting. Unapproved alternates, absentee voting, and proxies are not permitted at meetings.

ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments may be made to the By-laws of the Committee by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. All By-laws changes shall be consistent with the requirements of any Federal or State regulations affecting the operation of the Committee.

Section 3. Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern the Committee in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these By-laws.

Adopted: July 6, 2006

Kenneth O. Reynolds
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Chairman

Amended: November 1, 2007