

Public Involvement Guide Update



The Vermont Agency of Transportation is updating its 2017 Public Involvement Guide and seeks your input to ensure an effective update. Public involvement is an integral part of much of our work at AOT. The 2017 Public Involvement Guide was prepared to enhance public involvement, to encourage active participation, and as a resource for AOT employees. It provides best practices for sharing information with the public with the ultimate goal of improved transportation decision making.

Link to

Guide: <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/sites/aot/files/highway/documents/publications/VTransPublicInvolvementGuide2017.pdf>

In this guide, “public involvement” refers to a process of two-way communication by which both AOT and the public share information about transportation planning, policies, and projects. This ongoing process, which includes considering and incorporating public feedback into our work, enables AOT and communities to make transportation decisions that are better for all parties. This communication can be exchanged in person, over the phone, in writing, or virtually. State and federal law requires public involvement in most transportation planning, policymaking, and project implementation.

Public Involvement can also be referred to as *public outreach*, *stakeholder engagement*, *public participation*, *public input*, or any combination of these terms.

1. How do you participate in public involvement as part of your job? Select all that apply. *

- ☐ I write press releases
- ☐ I create social media content
- ☐ I write legal notices for newspapers or other distribution
- ☐ I use roadway signage
- ☐ I host public meetings and/or hearings
- ☐ I send emails, either directly or to a listserv/mailling list
- ☐ I work with Regional Planning Commissions
- ☐ I work with Town Officials (Selectboard, Road Foreman, Town Administrators, etc.)
- ☐ I use radio spots/interviews
- ☐ I use television spots/interviews
- ☐ I don't do any public involvement as part of my job
- ☐ Other

2. What challenges do you experience most often while engaging with the public? *

3. In which areas of public involvement could you use support? Select all the apply. *

- ☐ Preparing for public involvement in advance (e.g., making a plan for how I will engage the public)
- ☐ Preparing public communication materials (e.g., website content, press releases)
- ☐ Engaging a Public Information Officer (PIO)
- ☐ How to leverage internal AOT resources
- ☐ How to leverage community resources
- ☐ Understanding and fulfilling legal requirements
- ☐ Knowing who to talk to, developing a stakeholder list
- ☐ Facilitating virtual or hybrid public meetings or hearings
- ☐ Facilitating in person public meetings or hearings
- ☐ Anticipating hot-button issues
- ☐ Engaging with the media
- ☐ Engaging with television or radio
- ☐ Using social media to enhance outreach
- ☐ Writing correspondence/content for the public
- ☐ Engaging with challenging stakeholders
- ☐ Other

4. What tool(s) would help make your work with public involvement easier? Rank your top five choices. *

Please select 5 options.

- ☐ Guidance by project phase
- ☐ Checklists
- ☐ Examples of written outreach
- ☐ Written outreach/correspondence templates
- ☐ Decision making aids
- ☐ Best practices guide
- ☐ Training on the Public Involvement Guide
- ☐ Training on reaching particular stakeholder groups (e.g., challenging stakeholders, underrepresented populations, etc.)
- ☐ Assistance developing stakeholder lists
- ☐ Other

5. Have you made changes to the way you conduct public involvement since 2017 that we should address in this update? If so, how? *

6. Do you use a Bureau- or section-specific public involvement or communications process (e.g., checklist, protocol, guidance) other than the Public Involvement Guide? *

- ☐ Yes, we have one (or more) and I use it
- ☐ We have one (or more), but I don't use it
- ☐ No, we do not have one
- ☐ I'm not sure whether or not we have one

7. Have you ever used the VTrans Public Involvement Guide when planning for or actively practicing public involvement or outreach? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, but I know the guide is available to me
- ☐ No, I wasn't aware we had a guide
- ☐ I'm not sure

8. If yes, how did you use the Guide? *

- ☐ For inspiration, ideas, general guidance
- ☐ To ensure I followed applicable rules and regulations
- ☐ To look for project-specific best practices
- ☐ Other

9. Do you have any other comments or recommendations for this Public Involvement Guide update?

General Information

This survey is anonymous, but we'd like to capture some general program information. Please share your name if you'd like to participate in the Public Involvement Guide update, or if you're willing to be a resource.

10. Name (optional)

11. What is your Section/Bureau? *

12. Would you be willing to act as a resource for us as we update this guide? This means we would reach out to you from time to time to gather your feedback or ask questions. If so, please leave your name! *

- ☐ Yes!
- ☐ No thanks!
- ☐ Maybe; I'm interested to hear more about this

13. Thanks for your interest! Don't forget to share your name!

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