



# Public Participation Plan

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Watertown Jefferson County Area Transportation Council  
Long Range Transportation Plan 2050 Update  
February 2024

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# 1.0 Purpose of the Plan

## Overview

The Watertown Jefferson County Area Transportation Council has received funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation under the Metropolitan Planning Program (PL), as well as with funds through the New York State Department Transportation for the development of the initial Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The project will be developed to meet the metropolitan planning requirements of the current Federal transportation legislation, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

The Watertown Jefferson County Area Transportation Council (WJCTC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated by the Governor of the State of New York for the City of Watertown and surrounding area in Jefferson County. It has the responsibility of developing and maintaining both a Regional Transportation Plan and a Transportation Improvement Program for the area's federal aid eligible highway and public transit facilities. The Council was established in 2014 when the population of the Watertown urbanized area exceeded 50,000 as determined by the 2010 Census. It was determined that the geographic area for the Council's transportation planning would be limited to the adjusted urbanized area.

A principal task of the WJCTC is to conduct studies and develop plans that inform and guide members of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Policy Committees in their decisions towards developing the Transportation Improvement Program. The 2050 LRTP sets the direction for major transportation investments in the WJCTC Planning and Programming Area over a 20 to 25-year horizon.

## Public Participation Plan Objectives

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to detail the strategy to engage community members and stakeholders in the planning process. Additionally, it ensures the Steering Committee (SC) and Project Team have a clear understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the study area. The PPP is designed to be a living document, which will evolve as project and community conditions change, and is intended to be implemented even after the LRTP process is complete. The outreach effort aims to engage a full range of stakeholders in the community, including residents, property and business owners, developers, institutions, and key community organizations. The planning process will be transparent, and the public will have easy access to planning documents and project-related information.

## Community Engagement Process

The public engagement process for this project aims to engage WJCTC, City of Watertown and Jefferson County staff, various stakeholders, citizens, businesses, and members of the public that influence or may be impacted by the project. The public engagement process will build and sustain two-way communication regarding the preparation of the Watertown Jefferson County Area Transportation Council's Long Range Transportation Plan.

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) intends to describe public involvement and the techniques used to engage those most directly impacted by the project. In addition, communication goals for project progress will be established, which identify critical points in the project process. Finally, this plan is intended to formalize the commitment of the project sponsors and team to solicit meaningful input and engage the public throughout the process.

While this PPP is intended to provide a framework for public engagement, it is also intended to be a dynamic strategy. This plan is developed with the flexibility to evolve over the course of the project as the effectiveness of various tools and techniques are evaluated and modified to better suit the project and broader community.

The plan's approach incorporates the following to ensure a quality public engagement process:

- **Community Needs and Expectations:** Early in the process, the project team identified key stakeholders and community leaders who are expected to represent the broader community. Target audiences for this PPP are further described in Section 4.0.
- **Tools & Outreach Strategies:** The tools and strategies identified in this PPP have been determined based on the team's understanding of the project and the community's expectation for involvement. The engagement and outreach techniques are more fully described in Section 5.0 of this plan.
- **Plan Design & Monitoring:** Finally, the PPP includes techniques aimed to engage and inform the general public and key stakeholders in a manner appropriate for the project. This plan will be flexible enough to respond to project level and community changes as the study progresses.

# 2.0 Project Team

The project team consists of the project sponsor, the Steering Committee (SC) for the project – which consists of staff from the NYSDOT, the City of Watertown and Jefferson County – and the project consultants from Barton & Loguidice, WSP, and Highland Planning. The WJCTC will be responsible for maintaining the contractual relationship with the consultant team. Staff from the SC agencies will be directly involved with the 2050 LRTP's development, and will assist with outreach efforts, public meetings, and notices, as developed by the project consultants. The primary point of contact for the Project Consultants is Keith Ewald, Senior Project Manager at Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C.

## **WJCTC: Interim Director**

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## 3.0 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) for this project is comprised of staff from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the City of Watertown, and Jefferson County. Members of the SC and their affiliation are outlined below.

The SC is to serve as an advisory group to the project team and will provide input and guidance as the project progresses. SC meetings will be held at key points throughout the process to review and provide input on project material, and to obtain insight prior to public outreach events. The SC is scheduled to meet six times throughout the project.

### Steering Committee Contact List

Last Name	First Name	Email Address	Affiliation
Reff	Kristopher	Kristopher.Reff@dot.ny.gov	NYSDOT
Cadwell	Barbara	Barabra.Cadwell@dot.ny.gov	NYSDOT
MacCue	Brian	bmaccue@watertown-ny.gov	City of Watertown
Urda	Geoffrey	gurda@watertown-ny.gov	City of Watertown
Lawrence	Jim	jlawrence@co.jefferson.ny.us	Jefferson County

# 4.0 Project Stakeholders

The project team has identified a preliminary list of key stakeholders to engage throughout the project. Key stakeholders include MPO member agencies, City and County representatives, property and business owners, members of various advocacy groups, with a vested interest in the project. The list will be modified as additional stakeholders may be identified throughout the project. The table below gives an overview of the different types of stakeholders and their roles and interests.

	PROJECT ROLE	ENGAGEMENT METHOD
<b>Governmental Agencies</b> City of Watertown Jefferson County NYSDOT Region 7 FHWA FTA Watertown Housing Authority (WHA)	Provide understanding of data, funding opportunities, and other relevant local or regional strategies that relate to the project.	Steering Committee Meetings, Stakeholder Meetings
<b>Development Organizations</b> Fort Drum Development Group Development Authority of the North Country (DANC)	Provide understanding of issues and opportunities of transportation and development.	Surveys, Website, Public Meetings, Social Media, Stakeholder Meetings
<b>Transportation Interest Groups</b> Watertown International Airport Bicycle Advocacy Group Volunteer Transportation Center	Provide input on transportation issues in the area.	Surveys, Website, Public Meetings, Social Media, Stakeholder Meetings
<b>Community Groups</b> Jefferson Community College BOCES Watertown School District Disabled Persons Action Organization North Country Affordable Housing, Inc. Neighbors of Watertown, Inc.	Provide understanding of community priorities and the interests of minority groups.	Surveys, Website, Public Meetings, Social Media, Stakeholder Meetings
<b>Residents &amp; Visitors</b>	Provide understanding of potential issues and opportunities of the transportation system and its effect on quality-of-life in their communities.	Surveys, Website, Public Meetings, Social Media, Pop-up events

# 5.0 Meetings and Outreach

## Steering Committee Meeting #1

The goal of the Steering Committee Meeting is to communicate to the SC the current state of the project, and to collect guidance on the process. Information on such aspects of the project as public engagement, draft documents, data analysis, and project updates may be provided for comment.

### **Objectives**

1. Communicate the current state of the project.
2. Collect feedback and guidance on next steps.

### **Coordination**

**WSP:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

**Barton and Loguidice D.P.C.:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

### **Format**

Short presentation, followed by questions and answers.

Date/Time: Tuesday, March 12, 2024, from 5:00 to 7:00PM

### **Participation**

Steering Committee Meeting #1 will be open to the Steering Committee and Project Team.

### **Notification**

Notification of the date, time, and agenda for each meeting will be provided by Highland Planning. Highland Planning will notify SC members of the meeting through email.

### **Documentation**

Documentation of the meeting will be the responsibility of Highland Planning. The documentation provided will be in the form of meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will include a summary of the information presented by the project team, the comments/questions and feedback received from the Steering Committee, and the responses given from the project team. Meeting minutes and all meeting material used during the meeting will be made publicly available on the project website approximately two (2) weeks after the completion of the meeting.



## Stakeholder Meetings

Highland Planning will conduct stakeholder meetings with representatives of various stakeholder groups to collect their initial thoughts, connect them to the project, and get their feedback on the public engagement process. Highland Planning will conduct up to three (3) meetings of one (1) hour each. They will provide the representatives with questionnaire forms in advance to prepare them for the interviews, as well as provide meeting summaries to the Steering Committee and the Project Team.

### **Objectives**

1. Introduce and connect stakeholder groups to the project.
2. Identify potential pitfalls in the public engagement process.

### **Coordination**

**Highland Planning:** Conduct and summarize findings of stakeholder meetings, curate final stakeholder list.

**WJCTC:** Assist in generating list of stakeholders.

### **Format**

One hour group discussion on the following dates:

March 12, 9:00-10:30am

March 12, 12:30-2:00pm

March 12, 2:30-4:00pm

### **Participation**

Representatives from Highland Planning, Barton & Loguidice, WSP, and the stakeholder groups will attend the meetings.

### **Notification**

Scheduling of the date and time for each stakeholder meeting in March will be conducted by Highland Planning.

### **Documentation**

The meetings will be documented with questionnaires showing the stakeholder representatives' answers to the prepared questions, as well as any additional notes Highland Planning determined to be relevant to the project.

## **Public Meeting #1**

The goal of the first public meeting on March 11, 2024, is to familiarize the public with the role of an MPO, the LRTP, and how the community can participate.

### **Objectives**

1. Educate the public on MPOs.
2. Educate the public on the LRTP.
3. Collect initial information to guide the planning process.
4. Educate the public on avenues for their involvement in the process.

### **Coordination**

**Highland Planning:** Preparation for meeting, facilitation, generation of meeting summaries.

**WSP:** Generation of materials for presentation and open house.

**Barton and Loguidice D.P.C.:** Presentation, generation of materials for presentation and open house.

### **Format**

1. Short presentation, followed by questions and answers.
2. Open house with display boards and opportunities for the public to speak to members of the Project Team.

### **Participation**

Public Meeting #1 can be attended by all stakeholders and members of the public.

### **Notification**

Notification of the date, time, and agenda for Public Meeting #1 will be provided by the WJCTC before 2/19. Highland Planning will notify members of the Steering Committee, the stakeholder database, and the general public of the upcoming meeting through emails, press releases, content for the project website, and social media posts.

### **Documentation**

Documentation of the public meeting will be the responsibility of Highland Planning. The documentation provided will be in the form of meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will include a summary of the presentation given by the project team, the comments/questions and feedback received, and the responses given from the project team. Meeting minutes and all meeting material used during the public meeting will be made publicly available on the project website approximately two (2) weeks after the completion of the meeting.

## **Pop-up Event**

Highland Planning will conduct outreach at one event in the region lasting 2-3 hours. Outreach will be in a “tabling” format, and include information on the role of an MPO, the LRTP, and how the community can participate. The materials will be designed so that they can be used at other events, either unmanned or manned by WJCTC staff.

### **Objectives**

1. Educate the public on MPOs.
2. Educate the public on the LRTP.
3. Educate the public on avenues for their involvement in the process.

### **Coordination**

**Highland Planning:** Staff table, identify events to attend.

**WSP:** Generation of materials for presentation table.

**Barton and Loguidice D.P.C.:** Generation of materials for presentation table.

### **Format**

Table with information boards and a survey station.

### **Participation**

Representatives from Highland Planning will staff the table at events that are open to the public.

### **Notification**

Scheduling of the date and time for the pop-up event will be conducted by Highland Planning.

### **Documentation**

Highland Planning will record the number of personal interactions with members of the public that occurred at the pop-up event.

## **Steering Committee Meeting #2**

The goal of the Steering Committee Meeting is to communicate to the SC the current state of the project, and to collect guidance on setting the context for the process. Information on such aspects of the project as public engagement, draft documents, data analysis, and project updates may also be provided for comment.

### ***Objectives***

1. Communicate the current state of the project.
2. Collect feedback and guidance on next steps.

### ***Coordination***

**WSP:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

**Barton and Loguidice D.P.C.:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

### ***Format***

Short presentation, followed by questions and answers.

### ***Participation***

Steering Committee Meeting #2 will be open to the Steering Committee and Project Team.

### ***Notification***

Notification of the date, time, and agenda for each meeting will be provided by Highland Planning. Highland Planning will notify SC members of the meeting through email.

### ***Documentation***

Documentation of the meeting will be the responsibility of Highland Planning. The documentation provided will be in the form of meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will include a summary of the information presented by the project team, the comments/questions and feedback received from the Steering Committee, and the responses given from the project team. Meeting minutes and all meeting material used during the meeting will be made publicly available on the project website approximately two (2) weeks after the completion of the meeting.

### **Steering Committee Meeting #3**

The goal of the Steering Committee Meeting is to communicate to the SC the current state of the project, and to collect guidance on the proposed transportation improvements. Information on such aspects of the project as public engagement, draft documents, data analysis, and project updates may also be provided for comment.

#### ***Objectives***

1. Communicate the current state of the project.
2. Collect feedback and guidance on next steps.

#### ***Coordination***

**WSP:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

**Barton and Loguidice D.P.C.:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

#### ***Format***

Short presentation, followed by questions and answers.

#### ***Participation***

Steering Committee Meeting #3 will be open to the Steering Committee and Project Team.

#### ***Notification***

Notification of the date, time, and agenda for each meeting will be provided by Highland Planning. Highland Planning will notify SC members of the meeting through email.

#### ***Documentation***

Documentation of the meeting will be the responsibility of Highland Planning. The documentation provided will be in the form of meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will include a summary of the information presented by the project team, the comments/questions and feedback received from the Steering Committee, and the responses given from the project team. Meeting minutes and all meeting material used during the meeting will be made publicly available on the project website approximately two (2) weeks after the completion of the meeting.

## Public Meeting #2

The goal of the second public meeting is to present the draft plan to the public and collect responses.

### **Objectives**

1. Present the plan to the public in an engaging way.
2. Use public meeting to increase positive press of WJCTC.
3. Collect necessary feedback to complete final version of the plan.

### **Coordination**

**Highland Planning:** Preparation for meeting, facilitation, generation of meeting summaries.

**WSP:** Generation of materials for presentation

**Barton and Loguidice D.P.C.:** Presenting draft plan, Generation of materials for presentation.

**WJCTC:** Presenting draft plan.

### **Format**

1. Short presentation, followed by questions and answers.
2. Interactive discussion about inventory, issues, and opportunities.
3. Small group work to refine vision, goals, and objectives.

### **Participation**

Public Meeting #2 can be attended by all stakeholders and members of the public. The meeting is scheduled for the week of May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **Notification**

Notification of the date, time, and agenda for Public Meeting #2 will be provided by the WJCTC and advertised the week of April 29<sup>th</sup>. Highland Planning will notify members of the Steering Committee, the stakeholder database, and the general public of upcoming meetings through emails, press releases, content for the project website, and social media posts.

### **Documentation**

Documentation of the public meeting will be the responsibility of Highland Planning. The documentation provided will be in the form of meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will include a summary of the presentation given by the project team, the comments/questions and feedback received, and the responses given from the project team. Meeting minutes and all meeting material used during the public meeting will be made publicly available on the project website approximately two (2) weeks after the completion of the meeting.

## **Steering Committee Meeting #4**

The goal of the Steering Committee Meeting is to present the Draft Plan Document. Information on such aspects of the project as public engagement, draft documents, data analysis, and project updates may also be provided for comment.

### ***Objectives***

1. Present the Draft Plan Document
2. Collect feedback.

### ***Coordination***

**WSP:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

**Barton and Loguidice D.P.C.:** Represent Project Team, present project updates.

### ***Format***

Short presentation, followed by questions and answers.

### ***Participation***

Steering Committee Meeting #4 will be open to the Steering Committee and Project Team.

### ***Notification***

Notification of the date, time, and agenda for each meeting will be provided by Highland Planning. Highland Planning will notify SC members of the meeting through email.

### ***Documentation***

Documentation of the meeting will be the responsibility of Highland Planning. The documentation provided will be in the form of meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will include a summary of the information presented by the project team, the comments/questions and feedback received from the Steering Committee, and the responses given from the project team. Meeting minutes and all meeting material used during the meeting will be made publicly available on the project website approximately two (2) weeks after the completion of the meeting.

## **Other Outreach Tools**

Several different tools will be employed to organize information, document input, and evaluate the stakeholder and public participation process. Additional outreach tools are described briefly in the following sections.

### ***Stakeholder Database***

A stakeholder database will be developed and maintained that includes the name, title, agency, address, phone number, and email address of each person or stakeholder that will be included in the stakeholder outreach efforts for this study. The WJCTC will provide initial information to populate the database, and additional information will be gathered through the outreach process.

### ***Survey***

The purpose of the survey will be to identify issues and opportunities that the public identifies for the Long Range Transportation Plan. The survey will be administered electronically through Survey Monkey during the first phase of the project.

The consultant team will work with the SC to develop appropriate questions for the survey and to develop a flyer, a social media graphic and an email template for use on email blasts.

We propose the survey be advertised to the stakeholder list through email, and by the appropriate Public agencies as follows:

- send emails to various distribution lists they have available to them, as appropriate.
- post a social media graphic announcing the survey details on their social media platforms.
- advertise the survey on their websites.
- distribute/post flyers in the area as deemed appropriate.

### ***Website***

The project team will work with the WJCTC and the project partners to host project-related materials and/or information on their websites. Web information may include educational materials, meeting announcements, and the project schedule.

### ***Social Media***

The project team will consider using social media outlets to advertise outreach meetings, present project materials, or post educational information as the project progresses, and as determined appropriate by the project lead.



# 6.0 Project Schedule

## WJCTC Long Range Transportation Plan Update

	Feb 2024				Mar 2024				Apr 2024				May 2024				June 2024	
	5	12	19	26	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3
<b>Task 1 - Steering Committee Meetings</b>																		
Technical Committee Established																		
Public Involvement Plan (PIP)																		
Technical Committee Kick Off Meeting																		
Technical Committee Meeting #2																		
Technical Committee Meeting #3																		
Technical Committee Meeting #4																		
Stakeholder Interviews																		
<b>Task 2 - Public Outreach and Engagement</b>																		
Public Meeting #1																		
Public Meeting #2																		
Pop-Up Event #1																		
Prepare online public input survey																		
Administer public input survey																		
Prepare content for project website																		
Social media postings																		
<b>Task 3 - Review of Existing Plans and Documents</b>																		
Data and information collection																		
Summary of relevant local, regional, and state plans and																		
<b>Task 4 - Setting the Context</b>																		
Update Goals and Objectives																		
Access and update performance measures																		
Update socio-economic trends and analysis																		
<b>Task 5 - Analysis of Existing and Future Roadway</b>																		
Assess existing and future roadway performance of 5 roadways and 5 intersections																		
Strategies/ recommendations for improvement																		
<b>Task 6 - Safety and Security</b>																		
Obtain and assess crash data																		
Strategies/ recommendations for improvement																		
<b>Task 7 - Freight, Operations, and Other Planning</b>																		
Update the freight chapter																		
Update operations section																		
Environmental scan																		
<b>Task 8 - Alternative Transportation Modes</b>																		
Update bike/ped section																		
Update public transit section																		
<b>Task 9 - Proposed Transportation Improvements</b>																		
Recommendations for transportation improvements																		
Illustrative Projects																		
<b>Task 10 - Financial Plan Development</b>																		
Collect updated local, state, and federal financial information																		
Update revenue forecast																		
Evaluate the available revenue against transportation																		
<b>Task 11 - Draft and Final Plan Documents</b>																		
Develop Draft Plan																		
Develop Final Plan																		
WJCTC adoption																		
Submittal of plan documents to NYS DOT, FHWA, and FTA																		

- WSP
- B&L
- Highland
- All
- WJCTC