

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

LONG RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

Appendix A
Public Involvement Plan
November 2024



Introduction

MAPS 4, in partnership with EMBARK and ACOG, is conducting a Long-Range Transit Plan (LRTP) for Central Oklahoma. This plan will consider local services, planned high-capacity improvements, and complementary investments needed to create a cohesive network of transit services that support growth, enhances quality of life, and facilitates opportunity across Central Oklahoma.

The LRTP will be completed in three phases:

- **Assessment:** *analyze baseline conditions and community needs to focus service and determine infrastructure improvements*
- **Evaluation:** *develop a set of network scenarios to evaluate performance and effectiveness*
- **Implementation:** *detail facilities, staffing, cost, risks, and phasing for network scenarios*

To support the development of the LRTP, the public and key stakeholders will be engaged throughout the process, especially around major project milestones. The Public Involvement Plan (PIP) serves as a framework for engagement and identifies objectives, roles, and methods for engaging with these groups. The PIP will serve as a reference for the LRTP and includes the following sections:

- **Project Schedule**
- **Public Engagement**
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
- **Project Contacts**

Guiding Principles

The following principles guided the development of the PIP to promote inclusive engagement:

- Provide continuous opportunity for regional buy-in and engagement.
- Generate and maintain excitement for regional transit.
- Coordinate with people who are experts on reaching their communities.
- Involve low income and minority populations throughout the planning process.
- Actively seek ideas and input from existing transit users, residents within the corridor, and other populations who will be affected by the plan and future services.
- Ask meaningful questions of the public and stakeholders that result in achievable actions.
- Provide timely notification of engagement and commenting opportunities.

Project Schedule

The PIP is designed to span the duration of the planning process for the LRTP. Engaging the public and stakeholders throughout the project will facilitate better alignment between the technical work and community transit needs.

Table 1 below provides an overview of when outreach and engagement events are anticipated to take place. As the project progresses through the planning process, the activities, timeline, and proposed content may be adjusted based on guidance from MAPS 4 and EMBARK.

Table 1: Outreach and Engagement Schedule

	August 2024	2024	2025	July 2025
	Assessment		Evaluation	Implementation
MAPS 4 Committees & COTPA			JAN	MAR JUN
Edmond/Norman/ACOG Committees/BOD			JAN	MAR JUN
RTA Board			JAN	MAR JUN
Agency Interviews		OCT	JAN-FEB	
Agency Workshop		DEC	FEB-MAR	
Stakeholder Leadership Meeting		OCT	FEB	APR
Public Involvement			Virtual Town Hall JAN-FEB Public Feedback	Virtual Town Hall APR-MAY
Referendum (Spring '26)	Coordination			

Public Engagement

Approach

Engagement Round One – Community Transit Needs

The first round of public engagement is planned to take place in Winter of 2025, during the Assessment phase of the project. The primary objective of Round One is to inform the public of the project's vision, goals and planning process. Engagement activities in Round One will be designed to communicate the results of the Transit Needs Assessment and seek input from the public on regional transit opportunities.

Through a virtual town hall, the project will provide a project overview and introduce the elements of the LRTP implementation plan that impact the rider experience. The project team will launch a website and develop factsheets to share project progress with the public.

Engagement Round Two – Network Results

The second round of public engagement is planned to take place in Spring of 2025, during the Evaluation phase of the project. The goal of Round Two is to share the long-term vision for the Central Oklahoma transit network and generate excitement for the future of transit in the region. The project website will be updated with additional information and additional project factsheets will be developed with information on the long-term transit vision.

The project team will seek input from the public on the rider experience to guide the development of the implementation plan. Additional information on engagement activities is provided below.

Activities

Throughout the two planned phases of public engagement, the project will utilize a variety of outreach and engagement techniques to connect with the community and stakeholders.

Following both rounds of engagement, the project will produce a Public Involvement Report (PIR), to be included as an appendix to the final report. The PIRs will document engagement activities, summarize findings and outcomes, and will include all engagement materials produced during that round of engagement.

Public Comment

Throughout the duration of the development of the LRTP, the project will solicit ongoing public comments digitally through a form on the project website. Comments received through this medium will be reviewed on an ongoing basis during the project and will be summarized in the PIRs produced after each round of public engagement.

Virtual Town Halls

The LRTP will host two virtual town halls. The virtual town halls are intended to educate the public and seek input to inform the project at key milestones. The first virtual town hall will be held during engagement Round One during the Assessment phase of the project. The second will be held during Round Two of public engagement during the Evaluation phase of the project.

Consultant staff will prepare a presentation and other related materials (advertisement copy, factsheets, etc.) to support the virtual town halls. Members of the Project Management (PM) team will coordinate speaking roles during the virtual town halls. To support the events, EMBARK, ACOG, and the MAPS office will conduct promotional campaigns on social media and through other channels. The PM team will explore the use of paid placements on social media to increase visibility of engagement events.

Spanish subtitles will be added to the recording posted to the project website after the virtual town halls.

Factsheets

The project will produce factsheets to support both rounds of public engagement. One factsheet will be produced during each round, for a total of two factsheets. The factsheets are intended to provide updates and general information surrounding major milestones and will be available for print distribution during engagement events and on the project website. Each factsheet will be offered in both English and Spanish and will be designed to be ADA accessible both digitally and in print.

Website

The project will create and update a website to serve as a source for updates and information. The website will be updated to include factsheets and other information during each round of public engagement (during the Assessment and Evaluation Phases of the project). The website will also be updated at the end of the project, to communicate project outcomes and next steps. Other information to be included on the project website will include:

- Project background
- Information such as timelines and key milestones
- Events and key process points, as applicable

The project website will stand separately from the websites of other efforts (including the MAPS 4 BRT project, the City of Oklahoma City, and the RTA). To highlight the regional nature of the LRTP, the project website will use ACOG branding.

The Project Management Team will provide feedback on the content and development of the website and the website will be intended to only host information related to the development of the LRTP. This includes coordinating closely with the RTA to consider consistency in messaging in support of the sales tax referendum planned for 2026.

Digital Communication

To support both rounds of public engagement, the project will prepare additional digital communications intended to supplement the virtual town halls, factsheets, and website updates. The following tools will be utilized to create the supplemental digital communications and will assist in educating, informing, and engaging the public:

- ArcGIS StoryMap including an interactive timeline highlighting the process and findings of the LRTP¹

¹ An ArcGIS Online license will be provided by City of Oklahoma City and/or EMBARK to license this product

- Promotion on existing social media platforms to promote both virtual town halls (free and fee-based), such as X, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram

Equity-Based Engagement

The goal of equity-based public engagement is to ensure that all voices in a community are empowered to be involved in the process that will inform future decisions. To help ensure this, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 included Title VI, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives Federal funds. Community members with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) also face challenges participating in public engagement process that are only available in English.

While the project is not receiving Federal funds, and therefore not directly subject to Title VI requirements, the project is committed to supporting equitable engagement, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Addressing barriers that could affect people's ability to participate
- Partnering with community-based organizations
- Choosing accessible and comfortable in-person meeting locations
- Ensuring virtual outreach and engagement options
- Providing one-on-one assistance through outreach efforts
- Considering translation of key materials and providing a visible Google Translate option for website materials

These strategies will be used throughout the project's engagement processes, as applicable.

Strategic Partnerships with Community Organizations

MAPS 4 is partnering with two key firms that have strong existing relationships with community organizations in the Central Oklahoma Region. Working in connection with Gooden Group, Tango Public Relations has strong roots in Oklahoma City. Both firms have been heavily involved with other transit projects in the Central Oklahoma region, and leveraging these existing relationships will facilitate effective, respectful, and targeted engagement efforts.

Language Translation Services

During both planned rounds of engagement, public-facing materials will be provided in Spanish, in addition to English. Project website users will have the option of using Google Translate and factsheets will be provided in Spanish. For both planned virtual town halls, Spanish subtitles will be added to the recording to the project website after the events and posted to the project website.

Stakeholder Engagement

Approach

In addition to engaging the public, several key stakeholder groups will be engaged throughout the project. These groups will help inform key decisions, provide background and context to the technical findings of the project, and serve as a conduit for information to community members.

Primary stakeholders of the project include local transit providers, who will be engaged through two rounds of interviews and workshops:

- Edmond Citylink
- EMBARK OKC
- EMBARK Norman (City of Norman)
- RTA of Central Oklahoma
- First Capital Trolley
- Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG)
- Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT)

In addition to the local transit agencies, the PM team will conduct meetings with the following bodies to communicate project findings and provide an opportunity for leadership to weigh in on key decisions:

- ACOG Board of Directors
- RTA Board of Directors
- MAPS 4 Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)
- MAPS 4 Citizens Advisory Board Connectivity Subcommittee
- Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (COTPA)
- Oklahoma City Council
- City of Edmond City Council
- City of Norman City Council

Throughout the project, the Project Management Team may also coordinate with additional groups on an as-needed basis, including elected leaders, city staff, and other representatives of partner agencies and jurisdictions.

Activities

Information gathered from stakeholder engagement activities will be summarized in the Public Involvement Reports (PIRs) developed upon completion of both rounds of public engagement. The PIRs will be included as an appendix to the final project report and will include the input provided by agency staff and project partners through the stakeholder engagement meetings.

Agency Interviews

Two rounds of interviews will be conducted with staff from local transit providers (EMBARK OKC, EMBARK Norman (City of Norman), Edmond Citylink, First Capital Trolley, RTA) along with agency project partners (ACOG, ODOT). During both rounds of interviews, project staff will provide local transit providers and project stakeholders with a platform to offer feedback on the project at key milestones.

Round One

The first round of agency interviews will take place during the Assessment phase of the project and will focus on agency goals, challenges, and priorities for the future. The questions and logistics for the stakeholder interviews will be compiled into a separate interview summary. The general themes of the first round of interviews will include:

- Priorities for transit investment

- Operations and maintenance challenges or other considerations
- Facility plans
- Feedback received from riders and the community

Round Two

The second round of agency interviews will occur during the Evaluation phase of the project and will include the scenarios being developed and initial evaluation findings of those scenarios. While the specific questions for Round Two of the agency interviews will be informed by the discussions in Round One, and determined later, the general themes covered by Round Two are anticipated to be:

- Challenges/barriers to proposed investment packages
- Potential changes to proposed investment packages to better meet agency needs
- Phasing of investments

Agency Workshops

Two in-person workshops with technical staff from EMBARK OKC, EMBARK Norman (City of Norman), Edmond Citylink, the RTA, ODOT, and ACOG will be conducted. The first workshop is anticipated to take place in Winter of 2024 (see **Table 1**), during the Evaluation Phase of the project. Specifics of the discussion will be finalized following the first round of agency interviews, but the workshop will be intended to do the following:

- Share the findings from conditions assessment and findings from stakeholder interviews
- Explore transit opportunities in the region
- Discuss agency priorities and investment packages to improve transit

The second workshop is anticipated to take place in Spring of 2025 (see **Table 1**), during the Implementation Phase of the project. The specific points of discussion will be informed by both rounds of agency interviews and the first agency workshop, but are anticipated to include:

- Summary of findings of Assessment and Evaluation Phases
- Discussion of network refinements
- Phasing and timing of implementation plan for transit investments

Stakeholder Leadership Meetings

The project will conduct three virtual meetings with staff-level leadership from partnership agencies and jurisdictions. These meetings will be intended to brief the stakeholder leadership group on the status of the project so that they can effectively engage the decision-making bodies of their respective agency or jurisdiction. These meetings are planned to occur during the Assessment Phase of the project, the Evaluation Phase of the Project, and the Implementation Phase of the project.

To facilitate the engagement between the stakeholder leadership group and their respective decision-making bodies, the project will provide a stakeholder toolkit, consisting of a project background presentation, talking points, and updates on the technical work being conducted in support of the LRTP. This approach aims to promote local ownership of the plan, empower agency staff with project resources, and encourage regional collaboration.

Committee, Board, and Council Meetings

The primary mode of engaging with project stakeholders will be through presentations to relevant committees, boards, and elected bodies. These meetings are planned to take place in Winter of 2025, during the Evaluation Phase of the project, and Spring and Summer of 2025, during the Implementation Phase of the project. The committees, boards, and elected bodies that will be engaged by the project will be:

- ACOG Board of Directors
- RTA Board of Directors
- MAPS 4 Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)
- MAPS 4 Citizens Advisory Board Connectivity Subcommittee
- Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (COTPA)
- Oklahoma City Council
- City of Edmond City Council
- City of Norman City Council

Presentations to these committees, boards, and elected bodies will aim to provide relevant project information and updates at key milestones. Members of the Project Management Team will present these updates to stakeholder groups, while consultant staff will attend meetings on an as-needed basis. The project will prepare meeting materials, presentations, summaries, and action items as these meetings occur.

Project Contacts

Key Project contacts are listed below in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Project Contacts

First	Last	Email	Title	Organization
Chip	Nolen	chip.nolen@okc.gov	Planning Manager	EMBARK
Jesse	Rush	jesse.rush@okc.gov	Director	EMBARK
Kharlie	Barnaby	kharlie.barnaby@okc.gov	Chief of Bus Operations	EMBARK
Armando	Reyes	armando.reyes@okc.gov	Business Development and Public Affairs Manager	EMBARK
Suzanne	Wickenkamp	suzanne.wickenkamp@okc.gov	Assistant Director	EMBARK
Eugene	Fritz	eugene.fritz@okc.gov	Chief Safety Officer	EMBARK
Molly	Raney	molly.raney@okc.gov	Deputy Chief Safety Officer	EMBARK
Dennis	Fry	dennis.fry@okc.gov	Facility and Fleet Manager	EMBARK
Michael	Scroggins	michael.scroggins@okc.gov	Business Systems Manager	EMBARK
Delano	Fisher	delano.fisher@okc.gov	Streetcar Manager	EMBARK
Jason	Ferbrache	jason.ferbrache@okc.gov	Assistant City Manager	EMBARK
Marilyn	Dillon	marilyn.dillon@okc.gov	Mobility Management Administrator/ADA Coordinator	EMBARK
John	Sharp	jmsharp@acogok.org	Assistant Director	ACOG
Jennifer	Sebesta	jsebesta@acogok.org	Division Manager	ACOG
Eric	Rose	erose@odot.org	Office of Mobility & Public Transit Division Manager	ODOT
Jared	Schwennesen	jschwennesen@odot.org	Multi-Modal & Planning Division Engineer	ODOT
Travis	Rigdon	Travis.rigdon@odot.ok.gov	Planning Coordinator	ODOT
Christy	Batterson	christy.batterson@edmondok.com	Housing and Community Development Manager	City of Edmond
Kahley	Gilbert	kgilbert@cityofmoore.com	Project-Grants Manager	City of Moore
Taylor	Johnson	Taylor.Johnson@normanok.gov	Transit and Parking Program Manager	City of Norman
Justin	Henry	justin.henry@okc.gov	Transportation Program Planner	City of Oklahoma City
Melissa	Fesler	Melissa.trolley@yahoo.com	Director	First Capital Trolley
Kathryn	Holmes	kathryn@holmesassociatesllc.com	RTA Owner's Rep	RTA
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Katy	Gustafson	katy@goodengroup.com	Principal	Gooden Group
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