



CHAPTER 5: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

THE OCARTS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Essential to the transportation planning process, public participation ensures that Central Oklahoma citizens, community leaders and transportation stakeholders will help shape the region’s transportation future from the policy to the project-specific level. Much of ACOG’s plan development work occurs within MPO transportation committee meetings, but it’s the public’s reaction and input to that work that allows the long-range planning process to move forward.

Public participation is an opportunity for citizens to help define the goals upon which the region’s transportation policies and investments will be based, as well as to make more specific recommendations. Therefore, it needs to begin early, continue throughout the plan development process, and ensure timely access to key decisions in order to be meaningful. To accomplish this, the MPO updated the *OCARTS Public Participation Plan* in 2007. This plan described the public outreach opportunities envisioned for the long-range plan, general timeframes and milestones, and the various stakeholders and resource agencies that should be involved.



In order to help the public easily and quickly identify the efforts and products of the long-range plan update, the MPO developed a brand and logo. Formally known as the 2035 Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS) Plan, the plan is also known as *Encompass 2035*. Coupled with a recognizable logo featuring a compass, the logo was included on all agendas, flyers, brochures, maps, and the webpage dedicated to the plan. The “encompass” brand was carefully chosen. Not only does it play on the visual metaphor of a directional compass, but used as a verb, the term encompass means to “include comprehensively”—the primary purpose of the MPO’s public outreach and long-range planning efforts.

The plan webpage is located on the ACOG website. During the plan development process, this webpage was used as a communications portal to distribute surveys and to announce the plan kickoff, public meetings, and “call for projects.” Today, it provides *Encompass 2035* background information and products—the *Encompass 2035 Plan Summary* and *Plan Report*—as well as more detailed reports documenting individual tasks associated with the plan.