

The MPO Citizen's Guide

An introduction to the
regional transportation
planning process



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How can my family and I participate in the planning process?

- **Join the WAMPO email distribution list** to receive quarterly newsletters and notices when public meetings and comment periods are held. Simply send an email to wampo@wampo.org or call 316.779.1321.
- **Log on to www.wampo.org**, where you can read our plans and documents, learn about upcoming events and open houses, and read current and past newsletters.
- **Follow us on social media sites** like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- **Email comments to wampo@wampo.org** and we will pass them along to the Transportation Policy Body and Transportation Advisory Committee at their next meetings.
- **Attend the monthly meetings** of the Transportation Policy Body (usually the second Tuesday of the month at 3:00pm) and the Technical Advisory Committee (usually the last Monday of the month at 10:00am), held at 2711 W. 3rd Street Ste 208, Wichita, KS 67202. For those unable to attend TPB or TAC meetings, but interested in learning what happened, agendas and meeting minutes are available online at www.wampo.org.
- **Contact your elected officials** and let them know how you feel about the regional transportation system.
- **Invite us** to give a short presentation to your community organization, school, neighborhood group or club—we love getting out of the office!

Attend a meeting, check out our webpage, give us a call, or just stop in and ask a question. WAMPO actively seeks your comments and involvement in the transportation planning activities of the region. Your input can make a difference.

Have you ever wondered how decisions are made about transportation projects that affect your life? How government officials decide where to put a bus stop, road, or bridge? How are these and other transportation projects planned? How can you make sure your opinions are heard and considered by planners, road designers, elected officials, and other citizens?

This guide was designed to give you the answers to these and other transportation-related questions. We hope it will help you understand the transportation planning process. We believe that the better citizens understand the transportation decision-making process, the more certain it is we will have a transportation system that is safe, efficient, and responsive to public needs and concerns about their communities and the natural environment.

The Wichita Area Metropolitan
Planning Organization (WAMPO)
provides regional transportation
planning and coordination for 25
jurisdictions, including all or part
of Sedgwick, Butler, and Sumner
Counties.

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Why should regional transportation planning matter to me?



Chances are you used some form of transportation today. Whether you drove a car, rode a bike, took a bus, used a wheelchair, or walked your daily life is affected by transportation. Transportation is what allows you to get to and from work, school, meetings, the grocery store, special events, vacations, and various other destinations.

The transportation system is designed to serve you and your family. Funding to develop and maintain our transportation system comes from several sources—including your tax dollars. Therefore, your input is critical to the overall success and quality of our region's transportation system and to ensure that your needs are being met.

You do not have to be a transportation expert to participate in the planning process. You already have the knowledge and insight into local problems that transportation planners and local officials need to make more informed decisions.

Improving the transportation system is critical to the goal of raising the quality of life for the people of our region. Transportation is important to our economy as it provides a way for people and products to move freely. Transportation impacts our environment, the air we breathe, the safety of our family and our personal budget. With your help, WAMPO wants to ensure that our transportation system:

- Provides access to employment, education, healthcare, shopping and recreation through a variety of transportation choices.
- Supports economic growth through improved mobility for both goods and people.
- Enables livable communities and healthy lifestyles by creating pathways for people to ride bicycles and to walk.
- Creates strategies to help our region have cleaner air.
- Incorporates the needs and impacts of projects and policies on members of our community.
- Promotes procedures for safety on all types of transportation in the planning process.
- Includes accessibility for citizens with disabilities



What is the planning process?

Transportation projects are only implemented after a long, careful, and inclusive process. Topics such as population, employment, freight movement, land use, future development and traffic flow trends are researched and analyzed.

Public participation opportunities are created and implemented throughout the entire planning process (public meetings, hearings, and comment periods; surveys; digital media, website and email announcements; newspaper articles and notices; and public access announcements).

You are an important element in the transportation planning efforts in the WAMPO region. Without your input and ideas, WAMPO and our planning partners cannot have a true understanding of your community's needs. Organized communities and individuals can become part of the planning and approval process by attending MPO meetings and speaking with elected representatives on the MPO board. They can help determine where and on what projects transportation funds are spent. This is why it is so important for you to be involved.

A deeper understanding of the regional transportation planning process

The Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater Wichita region. This area includes all of Sedgwick County and the areas in and around the cities of Andover and Rose Hill in Butler County and Mulvane in Sumner counties. MPOs are required in urban areas with a population of 50,000 or more to provide multi-modal transportation planning.

The MPO brings together local governments, transportation authorities, citizens and other interested persons and organizations who assist in creating transportation policy and developing comprehensive plans that reflect the area's transportation vision for the future.

How is WAMPO organized?

WAMPO consists of the Transportation Policy Body (TPB), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), staff, and planning partners.

The **Transportation Policy Body (TPB)** is the decision maker. The TPB guides staff planning efforts, assists in developing plans, and makes the final decisions on key documents and amendments. The TPB consists of a 26-person board with representatives from the local and regional elected officials and the Kansas Department of Transportation.

The **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** provides recommendations on technical issues, critiques documents and plans, and suggests revisions. The committee is made up of representatives from cities, counties, the state, WAMPO's director, and a TPB member. Two additional members, one each from the Federal Highway Administration and

Federal Transit Administration, serve in an ex officio capacity.

WAMPO **staff** is comprised of planning and technical professionals that are responsible for the day to day operations of the agency. The staff provides assistance and support to the TPB and TAC, and organizes public participation activities.

WAMPO **planning partners**, who provide information and expertise in planning for a multi-modal transportation system, include:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT)
- Kansas Turnpike Authority
- Wichita Transit
- Consolidated Transit District #12
- Paratransit providers
- Freight concerns
- Air quality, bicycle, and pedestrian representatives
- Municipal and county governments
- The public—that's YOU



MPOs plan and implement transportation-related projects that can accommodate both the current population and foreseeable future. Transportation planning is a cooperative process designed to foster involvement by all users of the system, such as the business community, community groups, environmental organizations, freight operators, and the general public. This process is informed by WAMPO's work in:

- Monitoring existing conditions;
- Forecasting future population and employment growth, including assessing projected land uses in the region and identifying major growth corridors;
- Identifying current and projected future transportation problems and needs and analyzing, through detailed planning studies, various transportation improvement strategies to address those needs;
- Developing long-range plans and short-range programs of alternative capital improvement and operational strategies for moving people and goods;
- Estimating the impact of recommended future improvements to the transportation system on environmental features, including air quality; and
- Developing a financial plan for securing sufficient revenues to cover the costs of implementing strategies.

It should be acknowledged that WAMPO is a planning agency and does not implement capital improvements, which are accomplished by the sponsoring jurisdiction, organization, or agency. WAMPO administers federal transportation funds attributable to the area. Projects are submitted to WAMPO for consideration as part of the long range transportation goals and objectives identified in the MTP, and subsequently programmed in the TIP. These projects must follow set criteria to be included in the WAMPO transportation planning process:

- Projects must be within the WAMPO planning boundary.
- The project must be listed in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and correspond with one or more goals identified in the MTP.
- Road projects must be on roads functionally classified as a Minor Arterial or above if in urban boundaries, or a Rural Major Collector if outside of city boundaries.
- The projects must be sponsored by an agency authorized to receive federal funds.
- Eligible projects are typically funded with a maximum 80% state or federal money. A minimum match of 20% local funds is required.

WAMPO coordinates and completes many transportation plans, projects, and studies; however there are certain federally required plans and programs for which WAMPO is responsible. These plans and programs are designed to

create a vision, implement and monitor projects, incorporate public participation in all stages of the planning process, and provide financial guidance for the MPO. Our four main plans and programs are:

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2035

The MTP is the region’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The MTP is updated every five years based on regional population and economic growth projections. The plan identifies and prioritizes needed improvements of all types of transportation for the next 20+ years. The MTP must be fiscally-constrained; projects and project costs may not exceed the revenue (federal, state, and local funds) that is anticipated to be available. A proposed transportation project must coincide with the goals in the MTP for that project to be funded with federal transportation funds. All other plans and programs are linked to the MTP.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP documents the transportation planning activities and products WAMPO and the public transit provider will conduct or complete in the upcoming calendar year. It is updated annually, and may be amended, as needed, over the course of the year.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is our region’s short-term spending program for implementing transportation related projects. The program identifies, prioritizes and allocates funding for transportation improvements to begin over a four year period. All TIP projects must be identified in the MTP and must be included in the TIP to be eligible to receive federal transportation funding. The TIP is up- dated annually.

Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The PPP identifies opportunities for the public to get involved in the regional planning process, and includes methods to increase public awareness and understanding, as well as provide complete and timely information to the public and all transportation stakeholders.

We recommend that you get involved early to have the greatest impact on developing transportation solutions. Your input, whether verbal or written, is needed in the decision-making process to help shape the quality of life for your community. We want your family to get to and from work, school, and play safely and on time.

