

# CUMBERLAND VALLEY AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



## Public Involvement Plan October 2010



THIS DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE KENTUCKY TRANSPORTATION CABINET



# **CUMBERLAND VALLEY AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Cumberland Valley Area Development District (CVADD) Public Involvement Plan is to describe actions the CVADD Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) shall take to provide opportunities for the public to be involved in the statewide transportation planning process. It serves as a guide for CVADD to follow while planning for public involvement.

Public involvement is critical to the planning process and serves to inform as well as solicit public response regarding the needs, values and evaluations of proposed solutions. With opinions from concerned citizens we can collectively reach a solution that will best meet both local and regional needs.

The 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and its successor, The Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) of 1998, set the policy directions for greater public participation in federal and state transportation decision-making. The mandates of ISTEA, TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU have fostered a more concentrated effort to develop and maintain comprehensive and effective public outreach programs in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The goal of the public involvement plan will be to broaden the public input process in an effort to reach more sectors of the public. Public awareness will be a very important element in gaining public input. Emphasizing the importance of communicating and coordinating with other agencies and interests is also vital to the public involvement process. Ultimately, public involvement enhances the ability to implement transportation solutions that improve safety and efficiency, protect natural and human environments, and contribute to community vitality.

In order to gain cooperation in implementing transportation improvements, government, industry, commerce and citizens need to understand what the problems are, what improvements are necessary, what the effects will be and when each element of the program will be ready for public use and/or input. Opening transportation planning to the public through advisory committees and publishing and distributing the transportation improvement program are ways to inform the public of such issues. To be effective, it is essential that government agencies understand a given community's values and it is equally important for the community to understand the tradeoffs and constraints associated with project planning. This mutual understanding can only be achieved through early, frequent, and continued communication. When the public is engaged in the process, their insight helps assure projects suit community needs. The true test of a successful public participation plan is the level of public awareness and feedback. Too often, public participation does not occur until after the community-at-large becomes aware of an unpopular decision.



## **2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS**

The CVADD has developed a public involvement process that will continue to allow all persons access to the transportation planning process and the decision making process at a regional level. The plan provides an ample opportunity for all persons and interest groups to participate in the identification, evaluation, and recommendation of prioritized transportation needs. The process involves regularly scheduled transportation committee meetings, as well as public meetings with local and regional groups to discuss transportation issues, as deemed appropriate by the CVADD and/or the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC). The CVADD RTC will continue to make every effort possible to include disadvantaged and under-served populations throughout the District. This includes representatives from minority and low-income populations, as well as all other effected populations in the region, participating with activities conducted by the Regional Transportation Committee or in public meetings held for the purpose of soliciting input and participation with the development of transportation plans and discussions related to transportation issues and projects.

Activities to engage low-income and minority populations will be discussed and developed through efforts of the CVADD RTC. The CVADD RTC will encourage participation by minority and low-income populations in the transportation planning process, including but not limited to committee membership, county committees, meeting with various civic groups, neighborhood meetings, or other methods of contacting, informing, and obtaining input from subject populations.

The CVADD RTC membership has been expanded over the course of the past several years to include members representing a wide array of transportation interests from throughout the District. The committee membership includes: private citizens, local elected officials, civic organizations, chambers of commerce, economic development commissions, trucking industry, emergency and police officials, school transportation officials, public transit, senior citizens centers, and others.

The CVADD RTC meetings are open to the public and the meeting agendas include the opportunity for a public comment period. This action is made available to allow the public to provide information, concerns, and issues for consideration by the regional committee. Any comments received will be documented by the CVADD Transportation Planner and provided to the KYTC Division of Planning.

The CVADD RTC also conducts local or regional public information/input meetings as requested by the KYTC to provide additional opportunities for public comments related to transportation issues and the transportation planning process.

The CVADD transportation planner will also put forth effort to join local transportation committees within the district to broaden the perspective on local needs and issues.



All public involvement activities will be based on local needs and conditions. Public involvement activities will be designed and implemented in a flexible manner, adapting and responding to stakeholders needs and concerns.

Differences in requirements for public involvement exist across focal areas and types of projects, and, therefore, all public involvement activities should be based on local needs and conditions. There will also be varying approaches to design of public involvement activities that respond to local and regional conditions, such as cultural, political, and project-specific factors influencing project development and implementation.

The CVADD RTC will assist and support KYTC in: (a) providing relevant, timely, and accessible information to as many stakeholders as possible; (b) facilitating broad as well as project-specific consultations, especially at the local or regional levels; and (c) promoting the participation of stakeholder groups throughout the CVADD region.

CVADD Public Involvement activities include:

- Regularly scheduled regional transportation committee meetings
- Local or regional public/information meetings as requested by the KYTC or RTC
- Transportation Committee Reports during the monthly CVADD Board of Director's meetings
- Utilizing the CVADD quarterly newsletter to reach, educate and inform the public on various transportation programs/issues
- Conducting local transportation meetings with local officials and interested community leaders
- Using e-mail lists to provide transportation information materials to interested persons and agencies
- Using advisory committees/groups as an extension of the regional transportation committee to include a more diverse group of individuals and representation of the region. This extension group allows for the public involvement/input process to expand beyond the regular committee members.

Activities may also include:

- Utilizing the CVADD Web Site to post transportation projects / information / comments and providing a link for public feed back
- Address civic groups, chamber meetings, government meetings concerning the statewide transportation process
- Attending Fiscal Court and City Council meetings requesting input for the Unscheduled Projects List (UPL). This would include obtaining information relative to identifying new projects, evaluating existing UPL and prioritization information. This process allows the CVADD to be part of the meeting agenda, and allows local citizens the opportunity to also provide comments.
- Utilizing local newspapers to help reach more sectors of the public and provide education on the transportation planning process.



- Conduct public meetings at county courthouse, city hall, or local community centers
- Utilize existing services/programs at the CVADD to distribute information (i.e. Child Care, Housing, Aging) this could provide more opportunities to reach low-income, minority, and elderly populations
- Conduct a regional transportation planning workshop for government and local officials, planning commissions, economic and tourism officials, etc. to educate them on the statewide planning process
- Utilize local county and city access cable channels
- Use surveys in newsletters, mail-outs, e-mails, etc. to gain public input.



### **3. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT PLAN**

As a major component of the Public Involvement Process and to comply with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) requirements for public involvement the CVADD will maintain a Regional Transportation Committee for the purpose of consultation, soliciting input, developing regional goals and direction, identification and review of regional transportation needs, providing transportation information/updates and addressing any other transportation issues in the region. The committee should include a broad-based membership, develop and maintain by-laws consistent with KYTC direction, convene as necessary to complete the tasks assigned to the committee.

In agreement with the FY11 KYTC Regional Transportation Work Program Work Element 4, the CVADD transportation planner will prepare a committee involvement plan for the Regional Transportation Committee, listing proposed committee meeting dates and describing activities to be undertaken during the year for the purpose of educating/informing the committee of transportation activities.

The CVADD transportation planner has outlined five tentative meeting dates describing potential activities to be carried out in compliance with Work Element 4. The selected activities are for the intended purpose of broadening the Regional Transportation Committee's knowledge in the statewide planning process, as well as other transportation activities.

1. September 15, 2010
  - Transportation information/updates
  - Guest Speaker – Highway Safety Improvement Program
2. October 26, 2010
  - Transportation information/updates
  - Review/Approve RTC Bylaws
  - Review/Approve RTC Goals and Objectives
  - Review/Approve Prioritization Process Plan
  - Review Unscheduled Projects List
3. March 16, 2011
  - Review Unscheduled Projects List
  - Transportation information/updates
4. April 2011
  - Prioritization of projects



5. May 18, 2011

- Review/Critique of Prioritization Process
- Transportation information/updates
- Guest Speaker

This plan may include focus areas for the committee or initiatives to prepare the committee for work tasks completions, as in the review of all projects in preparation for prioritization activities, presentation of or development of priority-setting methods and instructions for the prioritization process, as well as include designated meetings for the prioritization process. This plan should be a “blueprint” for the fiscal year activities. Based on scheduling or unforeseen circumstance changes in the plan may be required to address the needs of the committee.

In efforts to educate the committee on different methods to conduct regional priorities, the CVADD transportation planner will introduce the Strings and Ribbons exercise (or similar activity) to give committee members a better understanding of what the regional priorities are and to demonstrate creative techniques for determining regional priorities.

If time and scheduling allows the CVADD transportation planner will make an effort to schedule guest speakers for the committee to increase awareness and education on the statewide planning process. Possible topics for the planner to consider are highway safety, freight planning, intermodal activities, information related to Title VI and public outreach programs, presentations from local transit authorities, presentations on local bikeways and/or greenways, rails to trails; committee members may identify other topics of interest that can be pursued by the CVADD. Other possibilities could include: field trips to review regional projects and tours of multimodal and public transportation facilities.

#### **4. FY11 TENTATIVE PRESENTATION ENGAGEMENTS**

In agreement with the FY11 KYTC Regional Transportation Work Program Work Element 8b, the CVADD Transportation Planner will plan to address the following groups for the purposes of educating the public on the statewide transportation planning process. If the need arises or specific requests are made to address other groups, the



CVADD will attempt to schedule those engagements. In an effort to schedule potential speaking engagements the CVADD Transportation Planner will solicit both the CVADD RTC and CVADD Board of Directors in an attempt to outreach other groups/organizations in the Cumberland Valley Region.

**Tentative Groups:**

1. Harlan County Chamber of Commerce, Harlan County,  
Tentative Date: December 2010
2. Williamsburg Kiwanis Club, Whitley County  
Tentative Date: January 2011
3. Bell County Chamber of Commerce, Bell County,  
Tentative Date: February 2011
4. Knox County Chamber of Commerce, Knox County,  
Tentative Date: March 2011

Other Entities – ADD staff will work to accommodate presentation requests from other interested entities throughout FY 11.

**5. PLAN FOR ENCOURAGEMENT/INCLUSION OF MINORITY, LOW-INCOME AND UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS**

The CVADD Transportation Planner will develop a plan to encourage participation by minority and low-income populations in the public involvement process and include these populations in the transportation planning process, including but not limited to committee membership, county committees, meeting with various civic groups, neighborhood meetings, or other methods of contacting, informing, and obtaining input from subject populations.

Title VI was enacted as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Public Outreach activities will include efforts to involve the traditionally underserved groups (i.e. minorities, elderly, low-income persons) in the transportation planning process. These potentially underrepresented populations may also be youth of the community, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and others who may be too busy to attend public meetings. These efforts may include, but not limited to the following:

- Identifying areas in the region with concentrations of minority, elderly, and low-income populations
- Including organizations that deal directly with minority groups on the Stakeholder lists



- Posting notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in county health departments and senior centers, local community centers, post offices and churches
- Publishing notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in Spanish
- RTC Advisory members to include representatives from low-income housing authorities, directors from senior citizen centers, public transportation representatives, etc.
- Including speakers/guests at committee meetings to discuss public transportation issues, pedestrian issues for minority and low income populations in their communities

The Cumberland Valley Area Development District (CVADD) is composed of eight counties: Bell, Clay, Harlan, Jackson, Knox, Laurel, Rockcastle, and Whitley. In 2000, CVADD comprised 5.9% of the state's population. The table below shows the underserved populations in each county.

CVADD Counties	Total Populations	White	Black	Asian Amer.- Pacific Isl.	Amer. Indian- Alaskan Native	Hispanic	Low Income	Elderly 65+	Occupied Unit-No Vehicles	Disabled-Over 5 yrs of Age	English Not Spoken @ Home
Bell	30,060	28,864	720	113	75	194	9,105	4,129	2,033	10,009	613
Clay	24,556	23,063	1,178	33	51	333	8,860	2,529	1,208	7,471	530
Harlan	33,202	31,728	869	101	159	216	10,662	4,629	2,180	11,515	497
Jackson	13,495	13,383	7	3	26	72	4,033	1,597	670	4,081	245
Knox	31,795	31,108	262	59	80	180	10,799	4,056	1,826	10,089	533
Laurel	52,715	51,484	331	187	193	291	11,028	6,042	1,845	13,490	1,042
Rockcastle	16,582	16,385	23	22	40	102	3,753	2,196	756	4,350	227
Whitley	35,865	35,280	123	76	81	249	9,103	4,634	1,621	10,102	684
<b>CVADD</b>	<b>238,270</b>	<b>231,295</b>	<b>3,513</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>1,637</b>	<b>67,343</b>	<b>29,812</b>	<b>12,139</b>	<b>71,107</b>	<b>4,371</b>

### CVADD Quick Facts

Statewide, CVADD contains:

- 5.9 percent of the total population
- 6.35 percent of the white population
- 1.19 percent of the black population
- 1.90 percent of the Asian American – Pacific Islander population
- 8.18 percent of the American Indian – Alaskan Native population
- 2.73 percent of the Hispanic population
- 10.84 percent of the Low Income population
- 5.91 percent of the Elderly population
- 8.16 percent of the Occupied Units with No Vehicles



- 8.13 percent of the Disabled Population over 5 years old
- 2.94 percent of the population that does not speak English at home

## **CVADD Demographic Analysis**

### **Cumberland Valley ADD**

Eight counties (8) are in the Cumberland Valley Area Development District. They are (with 2000 census population totals): Bell (30,060), Clay (24,556), Harlan (33,202), Jackson (13,495), Knox (31,795), Laurel (52,715), Rockcastle (16,582), and Whitley (35,865). The total population for CVADD is 238,270, which is 5.9% of Kentucky's total population.

### **Age**

There are 29,812 individuals in the Cumberland Valley ADD who are over the age of 65. The elderly population is highest in Laurel (6,042) and Whitley (4,634) counties. However, the highest percentage of people over the age of 65 is in Harlan County, at 13.9%.

### **Minority Population**

The Cumberland Valley ADD has 3,513 Blacks, 1,637 Hispanics, and 1,299 other Racial Minorities (American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander). The percentage of Minorities is very low in each county with the highest rate being in Clay County at 5.3%. While Clay County carries the highest number of Blacks (1,178) and Hispanics (333), Laurel County has the highest number of other Racial Minorities (380) American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander).

### **Education**

Approximately 15% of the CVADD population has an educational attainment less than the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The highest county percentage is in Clay County at 31.9%.

### **Low Income**

Median Family Income for the Cumberland Valley ADD is \$25,315; Kentucky's is 40,939. Out of the eight counties Laurel County has the highest Median Family Income at \$31,318, while Jackson County has the lowest at \$23,638. Clay County has the highest percentage rate of individuals living in poverty at 39.7%, while Laurel County has the lowest at 21.3%.

### **Disabilities**

The number of persons with disabilities from age 21-64 in the CVADD is 47,733, approximately 20% of the total population. Although the highest number of persons with a disability is in Laurel County (8,995), Harlan County has the highest percentage rate at 40.4%.

### **Outreach Strategy**



The RWG 6 has identified the primary underserved populations in the CVADD region as low income and disabled people. These two groups each account for nearly 30% of the area's population. Use of the following organizations is suggested to effectively reach these population groups.

**Low Income:** Utilize Grocery Stores that accept foods stamps to target the low-income population. Based on the data in the chart below, approximately 30% of CVADD population is a recipient of food stamps.

Location	Total Food Stamp Recipients (July 2009)	Population (US Census Estimates for July 2009)
Kentucky Total	723,193	4,269,245
Bell	9,787	29,055
Clay	8,946	23,930
Harlan	9,498	30,783
Jackson	4,385	13,645
Knox	11,684	32,810
Laurel	13,744	57,586
Rockcastle	4,323	16,788
Whitley	11,182	38,668
<b>CVADD Total</b>	<b>73,549</b>	<b>243,265</b>

Source: Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Posting flyers in Health Departments and Clinics, where most low-income persons seek medical care, also targets that population. To reach the low-income population an informational booth may be set up at local fairs and festivals to provide flyers and talk with the public. These events include:

**Disabilities:** Post flyers in post offices and medical facilities. Persons who have a disability frequently seek medical attention or have check-ups.

**Elderly:** Make use of the county Senior Citizen Centers, Medical Facilities, Post Offices, and Grocery Stores.

**Low-literacy:** Reach the low-literacy population through radio, television, festivals, and fairs. Schools may also be utilized. We can inform the middle and high school students and request that they discuss the project or plan with their parents.



## **Public Meetings**

Public Meetings are traditionally held at locations accessible to the public with handicap access, parking, etc., that can accommodate a large volume of citizens, such as:

SCHOOLS  
COMMUNITY CENTERS  
COLLEGES  
LIBRARIES  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDINGS  
FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
CHURCHES  
COURT HOUSES  
ADD DISTRICT MEETING ROOMS

EXHIBITS ARE DISPLAYED AND HANDOUTS ARE AVAILABLE AND DISTRIBUTED AT ALL EVENTS.

## **Newspapers**

12 newspapers are located in our area of concern. Newspapers are sent invitations, media releases, announcements advising them of meeting dates and locations along with pertinent information for any planned events.

Advertisements are sent to newspapers in county of involvement.

## **Radio**

13 Radio stations are in our area of concern. Each area of coverage has the potential for underserved listeners.

Announcements, invitations and media advisories are distributed to the stations in respective counties for events.

## **Television**

Television stations are notified of events in our area, same as Newspaper and Radio.

WKYT-TV AND SISTER STATION WYMT-TV AS WELL AS WLEX-TV AND WTVQ-TV SERVE ALL AREAS.



## **6. REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

The public involvement process is flexible and evolving. Other methods may also be identified to allow the public opportunity to review plans, discuss alternatives, question recommendations and express their view. The CVADD Public Involvement Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis. During this evaluation process the RTC should discuss and explore new opportunities/methods for obtaining public input for inclusion into the plan and consider removing inefficient and ineffective methods.

All efforts to inform / educate the public; including the traditionally underserved will be documented by the CVADD utilizing the quarterly report system that is required by the KYTC. If additional documentation is requested by KYTC, then staff will provide the documentation as outlined by the KYTC Annual Work Program (or special request guidelines) for the Area Development Districts.

A constant constraint in any project is funding. The CVADD RTC has limited resources to accomplish objectives. It must ensure that funds are spent in ways that will achieve the desired results. The CVADD RTC must periodically assess the effectiveness of its public involvement techniques to ensure that funds and efforts are achieving the public involvement objective.

