

Chapter 1 | Plan Development

Introduction

Transportation is an everyday component of life that has lasting impacts on people everywhere. It represents a critical component of an area's built infrastructure and social environment. The *Regional Intergovernmental Council's Metropolitan Transportation Plan* intends to establish a roadmap for the region that can result in a transportation system that contributes to the overall well-being of the region and its residents while also meeting federal requirements. The Regional Intergovernmental Council—or RIC—is responsible for updating the regional transportation plan every four years. The MTP addresses all modes of transportation including automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, transit, and trucks.

The *Regional Intergovernmental Council's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (RIC MTP)* is shaped by several elements including federal legislation and the direction of both state and local agencies. Federal transportation legislation, including Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) and the subsequent Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, outline funding and procedural requirements for multimodal transportation planning in metropolitan areas and states. They require MPOs and states to develop transportation plans and transportation improvement programs through a performance-driven, outcome-based approach, which is reflected in this MTP.

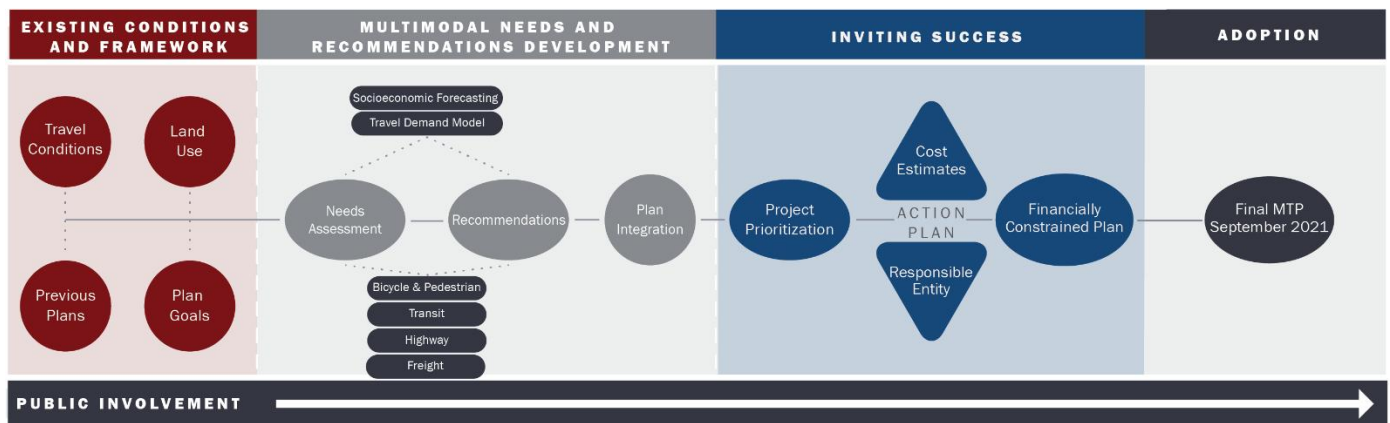


West Virginia Capitol Building

The Planning Process

The *RIC MTP* is the product of ongoing partnerships between local, state, and federal representatives, in addition to a committed Steering Committee, the public, and key stakeholders. The planning process was crafted to help facilitate an open dialogue about the existing and anticipated congestion concerns, safety issues, accessibility concerns, and connectivity gaps for all modes of transportation. The planning process below outlines the MTP approach and timeline.

Figure 1-1: MTP Timeline



Public Outreach

Steering Committee

The *RIC MTP* Steering Committee was formed by a group of RIC staff, local officials, and citizen advocates with a cultivated understanding of the needs and opportunities of the two-county region. On August 26, 2020, the Steering Committee met for the first time. During that meeting, the Steering Committee was presented with an overview of the MTP planning process, the project work plan, the roles and responsibilities of a Steering Committee member, and an initial discussion about how to facilitate public outreach.

The Committee's duties included acting as a sounding board for the project team, providing input on existing conditions, aiding in the development and vetting of recommendations, and establishing the prioritization criteria. In total, the Steering Committee met six times throughout the planning process, as shown in Table 1-1 on the following page.

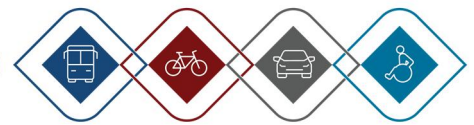


Table 1-1: MTP Steering Committee Meeting

MEETING	TOPICS COVERED
Steering Committee Meeting #1 August 26, 2020	Plan Goals Plan Visioning Social PinPoint Launch
Steering Committee Meeting #2 November 18, 2020	State of the Region Travel Demand Model Overview Public Outreach Summary I
Steering Committee Meeting #3 January 27, 2021	Recommendations Development Prioritization Methodology
Steering Committee Meeting #4 April 28, 2021	Public Outreach Summary II Prioritized Project Review
Steering Committee Meeting #5 July 13, 2021	Financial Constraint Public Outreach Summary II
Steering Committee Meeting #6 August 4, 2021	Draft Plan Review

Stakeholder Interviews

At the onset of the public outreach process, the project team identified several stakeholder groups including staff from county and municipal planning departments, representatives from the freight community, transit advocates, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, and local government representatives. These stakeholder groups were interviewed to gain insight into transportation, economic, social, and political issues in Kanawha and Putnam counties. The feedback received was used to verify information from the 2045 plan, validate existing conditions information, and generate preliminary recommendations.

Public Workshops

Collecting input from the public throughout the planning process is essential to understanding the local needs, identifying the importance of projects, and creating public trust in the planning process. Residents recognize the strengths and limitations of their transportation system and how transportation decisions impact their daily lives. To leverage the knowledge of the Kanawha-Putnam residents, the project team—with the assistance of the Steering Committee—conducted two public workshop series.

Since the majority of the plan’s development took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, gathering in-person was not possible. Public meetings were facilitated through an online platform at critical points of the plan’s development. This online presence was especially vital to keep the community involved throughout the planning process.

Public Workshop Series #1

The first public workshop series occurred on October 26 and 27, 2020. The activities helped generate information that aided the initial phases of the planning process. This input was used in the creation of the goals and objectives as well as understanding existing conditions.

Since the public workshop could not be held in-person, a narrated presentation was created by the project team. This allowed attendees who were not able to attend a session to still have access to information about the MTP. The attendees were also informed of how they could engage in the MTP process vis-à-vis the project website.

Public Workshop Series #2

The second public workshop series was held on February 24 and 25, 2021. The workshop allowed attendees to review multimodal recommendations and weigh in on project prioritization.

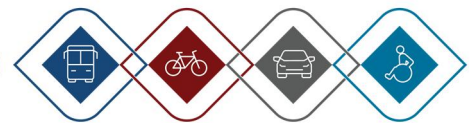
Project Website

The project website was used as a communication tool throughout the development of the MTP. The plan used Social PinPoint to communicate various plan updates with the public at critical points in the planning process. This included posting public workshop agendas, building a document library with previously adopted plans, and re-directing members of the public to surveys or mapping activities. As a dynamic, web-based platform, Social PinPoint acted as a repository of information throughout the planning process.

Online Surveys

To reach a wide variety of public participants, two interactive web-based questionnaires were launched. The first survey focused on goal and vision setting had over 70 members of the public participate between October 25, 2020 and December 1, 2020. The online survey was advertised using handouts and flyers, email blasts, media posts, word of mouth, and the RIC website. This advertisement strategy yielded many survey responses and added valuable insight into community preferences, opinions, and issues. Ultimately, the public input was used to inform the development of transportation recommendations and project prioritization.

8,100
<i>Total Website Visits</i>
151
<i>Total Survey Responses</i>
90
<i>Total Survey Comments</i>
65
<i>Total Map Comments</i>
1,333
<i>Total Unique Users</i>
33
<i>Total Document Downloads</i>



Priority Ranking of Planning Themes

Survey respondents were presented with six planning themes and asked to rank them in order of importance. The planning themes in order of priority and top theme associated with each are summarized below.

#1 *Economic Vitality*



Promote economic development through targeted transportation investment

#4 *Safety & Security*



Improve the travel safety and security in the Greater Kanawha Valley

#2 *Mobility & Accessibility*



Promote an efficient, interconnected, and accessible transportation network

#5 *Culture & Environment*



Preserve and sustain the natural and built environment

#3 *Land Use & Transportation*



Improve the integration of land use and transportation

#6 *System Preservation*



Support and strengthen the current transportation network

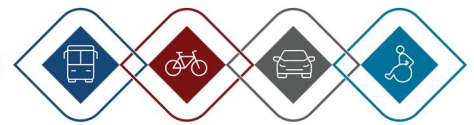
The second survey was open from February 1, 2021 to May 31, 2021. With over 70 survey responses and 942 total site visits, survey participants were asked to identify their priority projects for roadway and intersection projects. The full public outreach summary can be found in the Appendix.

Previous Planning Efforts

The *RIC MTP* is coordinated closely with other local, state, county, and regional plans that impact planning efforts around the area. The MTP makes effort to acknowledge the planning process and outcomes of the previous plans and incorporate them when relevant to ensure consistency. Table 1-2 summarizes the transportation plans prepared within the region that were reviewed and utilized during the data collection phase.

Table 1-2: Previous Plan Review

DOCUMENT TITLE	ISSUING AGENCY	YEAR
Montrose Drive and MacCorkle Avenue Road Safety Audit	RIC	2020
Patrick Street and Patrick Street Plaza/Kanawha Boulevard West Road Safety Audit	RIC	2020
Pennsylvania Avenue North and South Road Safety Audit	RIC	2020
US 60 between Mile Branch Rd and Hull Ave Road Safety Audit	RIC	2020
West Virginia State Rail Plan Update	WVSRA, WVDOT	2020
WV 34 from I-64 to Great Teays Boulevard Road Safety Audit	RIC	2020
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan	Boone, Clay, Kanawha, and Putnam Counties	2019
Kanawha-Putnam Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	RIC	2019
Multimodal Economic Impact Study for Huntington Tri-State Airport	KYOVA	2018
West Virginia State Freight Plan	WVDOT	2018
Regional Transportation Plan 2045	RIC	2017
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	WVDOT	2017
Tri-State Airport Access Road Study	KYOVA	2017
Goff Mountain Road and Big Tyler Road (WV 622) Corridor Study	RIC	2016
KRT System Analysis Plan	KVRTA	2016
Third Street Corridor Study	RIC	2016
WV 601, Jefferson Road, US 119 to US 60 Environmental Assessment	FHA, WVDOT	2016
Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan	Kanawha County	2015
Regional Development Plan Region III	RIC	2015
Spring Hill Corridor Study	RIC	2015



DOCUMENT TITLE	ISSUING AGENCY	YEAR
Congestion Management Process for Huntington, WV-KY-OH Urbanized Area	KYOVA	2014
Imagine Charleston	City of Charleston	2013
Metro Mobility 2040	RIC	2013

Performance-Based Planning

Performance-based planning describes the dynamic approach utilizing system-wide information to make strategic investments to achieve the goals outlined for the planning area. To be consistent with federal regulations—MAP-21 and the FAST Act—the RIC MPO has chosen to adopt the statewide performance measures and targets. These performance measures and evaluation criteria to help guide transportation decision-making while also monitoring the network’s performance in years to come, are outlined in the Appendix.

Guiding Statements

One of the first steps of creating a long-range transportation plan is to develop guiding statements that will provide direction for the entirety of the planning process. The guiding statements also serve as an important tool during the prioritization process as the Kanawha-Putnam area has a finite amount of transportation dollars to fund the identified needs.

The guiding statements were developed through collaboration with the Steering Committee and reflect the community’s vision for the future of the transportation network. The statements combine the emphasis provided by the FAST Act with localized context to provide the framework for a regional transportation strategy. Table 1-3 outlines the goals and guiding statements for the *RIC MTP*.

FAST Act and the previous MAP-21 legislation requires MPOs to undertake a planning process that establishes and uses a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making that considers projects and strategies that address and support ten federal goals. All of these federal planning goals, shown in Table 1-4, are accommodated within the plan goals set forth in the *RIC MTP*. Eight of these ten were part of the federal legislation during the previous MTP development. Resiliency and travel and tourism were added as new goal areas through the FAST Act.

Table 1-3: MTP Guiding Statements and Goals

CULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Preserve and sustain the natural and built environments

- Develop strategies to decrease single-occupancy vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled
- Encourage use of alternative transportation modes and energy sources that reduce air pollution, fuel consumption, and other environmental impacts
- Improve access to areas of historical, cultural, and recreational significance
- Minimize development impacts in areas of cultural and historic significance
- Reduce development impacts on environmentally sensitive areas

ECONOMIC VITALITY

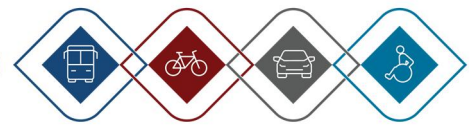
Promote economic development through targeted transportation investments

- Encourage the concentration of employment and activity sites within established transit corridors to maximize transportation efficiency
- Focus transportation system improvements to support and promote tourism
- Improve the access to key economic needs and areas of planned development
- Promote multimodal access to encourage economic growth in areas of need
- Support transportation investments and policies that work to create jobs and improve access to people, places, and goods

LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

Improve the integration of land use and transportation

- Encourage efficient infill and redevelopment to maximize use of the existing transportation system
- Enhance communication and coordination between various transportation planning and land use planning agencies
- Increase coordination between roadway design and land use development to improve transportation system performance
- Maximize effectiveness of parking infrastructure and regulations



MOBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

Promote an efficient, interconnected, multimodal, and accessible transportation network

- Develop strategies to manage travel demand
- Identify and recommend alternative traffic control and system optimization measures
- Increase intermodal connectivity to allow system users greater mode and route choices
- Increase transit accessibility and availability to transit-dependent users and persons with special needs
- Promote efficient regional routes and internal connectivity for freight and goods movement
- Reduce peak-hour congestion by promoting flexible working hours and innovative workforce policies for regional employers
- Utilize Complete Streets initiatives to improve pedestrian mobility and expand a safe bicycle lane network

SAFETY & SECURITY

Improve the travel safety and security in the Greater Kanawha Valley

- Facilitate coordination for emergency preparedness
- Implement incident management strategies to quickly reestablish traffic flow and increase the safety of motorists and emergency personnel
- Minimize intersection conflicts, increase pedestrian safety, and enhance safety by refining access management policies
- Mitigate potential conflicts and delays at rail crossing sites
- Promote long-term resiliency of the transportation network to prevent interruptions, endure damages, and quickly recover from disturbances
- Reduce the number of high incident-accident locations
- Reduce the number of injuries, fatalities, and hazardous spills

SYSTEM PRESERVATION

Support and strengthen the current transportation network

- Develop strategies and implement measures to extend the functional life of transportation facilities
- Increase the use of innovative transportation technology to enhance the efficiency of the existing transportation system and to be better prepared for emerging vehicle technologies
- Reduce the number of potential conflicts between various transportation modes

Table 1-4: RIC MTP Goal Alignment with Federal Transportation Goals

Federal Goals	RIC MTP GUIDING STATEMENT					
	Culture & Environment	Economic Vitality	Land Use & Transportation	Mobility & Accessibility	Safety & Security	System Preservation
Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency		●		●		
Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users					●	
Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users					●	
Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight				●		
Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns	●		●			
Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight				●		
Promote efficient system management and operation				●		
Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system						●
Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation						●
Enhance travel and tourism	●	●				