



## Public Involvement Plan

### Introduction

This Public Involvement Plan has been developed to guide the Orange County Transportation Council (OCTC), the Orange County Planning Department and the entire Study Team in implementing a comprehensive and transparent community outreach process for the Newburgh Area Transportation and Land Use Study.

The Study Team is committed to a continuous and comprehensive public outreach program providing the opportunity for frequent and meaningful public feedback. The Team strives to foster open communication and will work in collaboration with OC Planning to implement a Public Involvement Plan that establishes a strong foundation for building consensus and meets the requirements for public involvement in Federal transportation planning regulations (established with the Safe Accountable Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005 (SAFETEA). Informing, involving and engaging the public is essential in transportation and land use planning that is responsive to community values, builds an understanding of the purpose and benefits to the area of proposed plans and initiatives, and that enlists their participation in the process.

### Project Description

The Newburgh Area Transportation and Land Use Study is a 24-month multi-modal project under the direction of the Orange County Planning Department, on behalf of the Orange County Transportation Council (OCTC), which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Orange County, NY. The Project Manager for the study is the Deputy Commissioner of Planning, who serves as OCTC staff director. The Project Manager will coordinate, as necessary, with the Commissioner of Planning, the Orange County Executive, OCTC member agencies, and county government resources. This study is being undertaken on behalf of OCTC through a contract managed by the County of Orange, OCTC host agency. The project is supported through matched Federal transportation planning funds provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation via the New York State Department of Transportation.

### Project Geographic Area

The primary study area for this project is the OCTC Newburgh Area, one of three regions described in the OCTC Operating Procedures. This area encompasses the City of Newburgh and the four nearby Towns of Newburgh, New Windsor, Montgomery and Cornwall and the villages within those towns (Walden, Montgomery, Maybrook, and Cornwall-on-Hudson). Contiguous municipalities within and outside Orange County may be included in analyses, especially where connectivity and development trends affect or are affected by the primary study area.

The planning process will include additional/detailed study in a number of geographic corridors or nodes, including: U.S. Route 9W; Broadway/NY Route 17K; sections of NY Routes 300, 207, 52 and 32; and the Vails Gate area.



## Project Stakeholders

The Newburgh Area Land Use Study is a collaboration between the project's lead agencies, a consultation group of transportation and land use planning professionals, area governments, agencies, stakeholder groups and the public.

This plan will actively seek the input of a broad range of perspectives in the development of transportation and land use proposals and outline their views regarding the challenges and opportunities of the various approaches presented. The goal is that through the process of public involvement, the community will develop a shared vision for the future of the Newburgh Area and Orange County, in general.

## Study Advisory Group

The Study Advisory Group comprises OCTC member agencies within the primary study area. It will help focus the effort on specific local planning projects and issues that may influence growth patterns and mobility in the region. The Study Advisory Group will ensure that specific local land use plans, laws, ordinances, issues and projects are appropriately considered. These key stakeholders are tasked with relaying information from the study to the community and encouraging constituent participation and feedback.

### Study Advisory Group members:

- Orange County [County Executive/OCTC Chair, Planning Dept (project manager)]
- NYS DOT Region 8
- NYS Thruway Authority
- MTA Metro-North Railroad
- Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
- City of Newburgh
- Town of Newburgh
- Town of New Windsor
- Town of Cornwall
- Town of Montgomery
- Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson
- Village of Walden
- Village of Maybrook
- Village of Montgomery

The Study Advisory Group will convene approximately six (6) times during the course of the Study. These meetings will function both as partnering and goal-setting sessions and will provide a regular check-in point to gain technical insights from OCTC study area members. In collaboration with OC Planning, the Study Team will prepare meeting agendas prior to each meeting and meeting notes that will be incorporated into monthly reports submitted via e-mail. All notices of the Study Advisory Group meetings and meeting summaries will be posted on the Study Web site as a matter of public record.

## Study Team

The Study Team comprises the Orange County Planning Department and the Consultant Team. The team will meet as needed throughout the project and work in collaboration to achieve the study objectives.



## Newburgh Area Transportation & Land Use Study



### Consultant Team:

- AKRF, Inc. (lead firm)
- Cambridge Systematics, Inc.
- Eng-Wong Taub & Associates
- Lochner Engineering
- Abrams-Cherwony Group of Gannett Fleming
- Arch Street Communications
- Regional Plan Association
- Pattern for Progress

### Public Involvement Goals & Objectives

The goals of the Public Involvement Plan are:

- To ensure that the public is informed about the study and any recommendations for their communities.
- To demonstrate a commitment to the community outreach process
- To solicit and incorporate public input in transportation and land use planning for the Study Area.
- To work toward consensus among communities and agencies regarding issues of importance and workable solutions.
- To create a shared vision for transportation and land use improvements in the Newburgh Area.

Achieving the goals of the Public Involvement Plan requires fulfillment of the following objectives:

- The effective combination of public visioning workshops, directed stakeholder outreach, focused roundtables and public communications to inform and engage the community in the study process.
- Creation of a multi-faceted effort to advise the community of the study progress and findings.
- Meaningful dialogue between a broad cross-section of the population and the agencies involved in the study.

### Public Involvement Strategies

The Public Involvement Plan for the Newburgh Area Transportation and Land Use Study features: 1) directed stakeholder interviews and focused roundtables, 2) a series of public design visioning workshops, 3) general public information meetings, and 4) public communications using a combination of print and electronic media.

Public outreach will be conducted throughout the study and will be a component of all tasks. Up to seven (7) public meetings—at least three (3) of which will be community visioning workshops (Public Design Workshops)—will be scheduled for key milestones associated with task deliverables. Public communication will include a Study Web site and up to four (4) Study newsletters—to be released at key points in the project.

### Directed Stakeholder Interviews & Focused Roundtables

As a foundation for developing a detailed work scope, the Study Team will conduct stakeholder interviews with elected officials, planners, and transportation agency representatives. Conducted as part of Task 3, these interviews with each community within the study area and with transportation agencies will identify and obtain

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insights into transportation planning issues, related land use issues, as well as inventory information such as comprehensive plan documents, local land use regulations, and information regarding new or proposed development projects.

Following these initial interviews, a series of focused roundtable discussions with municipal leaders (Task 6) and key stakeholders will identify and consider issues regarding specific corridors and nodes within the study area. These roundtables will establish the framework for the visioning exercises conducted in the public design workshops. Organizations and individuals will be identified with input from the Study Advisory Group.

### **Visioning / Public Design Workshops**

Visioning / public design workshops, focused on specific study area corridors and nodes, will be integrated into the overall planning process to establish a collaborative and collective foundation for planning that is endorsed by a broad range of community members.

Regional Plan Association (RPA), in coordination with other Study Team members, will lead the overall visioning component. These workshops will be open to the public. To increase participation, the Study Team will identify and reach out to organizations, local governments, infrastructure agencies, businesses, community groups that represent a wide and diverse range of community members to encourage participation. These facilitated public meetings will feature visioning exercises intended to draw the community together, exposing shared values and purposes, and enabling the community to articulate a shared vision of the future from an economic, physical and environmental perspective. This work will help inform transportation planning as well as lead to lessons for community land planning.

Three (3) public design workshops will be conducted. Each workshop will be held in a location convenient to the portion of the study area that is the special focus of that workshop. For example, the workshop which will focus on streetscape design for the Broadway corridor in the City of Newburgh will be conducted at a city location on or very close to the Broadway corridor. The workshops are tentatively scheduled to be conducted between September 2009 and January 2010.

### Travel Model, Model Animation, Traffic Micro-simulation

As part of this effort, the Study Team will be using the Orange County digital Travel Demand Model and other transportation system analysis tools, some of which produce visualizations or animations. The study will make use of these visualizations and animations to enhance understanding of analyses, potential roadway designs, and transportation system alternative futures.

### Public Information Meetings

Public outreach efforts will be conducted throughout the project and will include up to four (4) general public information meetings (in addition to the roundtable and public design workshops described above) to be scheduled for key milestones associated with deliverables on other tasks. Building upon the findings from the directed stakeholder interviews, focused roundtables and visioning workshops, these public meetings will engage a broad mix of participants and will be designed to present information and analyses from the study and promote discussions regarding participant ideas and views. Where possible, meetings will be held in venues that are familiar and convenient within the study area to facilitate access by potential participants. Such venues could include schools and churches, among other locations. All public meetings will be held in ADA compliant locations.

In collaboration with OC Planning, the Study Team will prepare meeting agendas prior to each meeting, will provide appropriate public notice of each meeting and generate summaries (both print and electronic) as a matter of public record.



Arch Street Communications will coordinate preparation of presentation materials and, with the rest of the Study Team, all other materials needed for all meetings. The OC Planning Project Manager will review and approve all agendas, meeting materials and summaries prior to their release to participants and the public.

## **Public Communications**

The goal of all public communications is to engage a broad representation of the public in the study process, and provide opportunities to ensure a diversity of ideas and viewpoints is incorporated into discussions of mobility, transportation infrastructure and land planning issues.

The outreach effort for this Study will include a specific approach to engage local populations, with Spanish-language outreach initiatives where appropriate. In addition, we will reach out to ADA and disadvantaged populations through the public agencies and support groups that represent these populations. Every effort will be made to provide materials accessible to the broadest possible audience.

Working in collaboration with OC Planning and the Study Advisory Group, the Study Team will identify community organizations for targeted outreach.

## **Public Outreach Tools and Strategies**

To build awareness about the project and generate as much public attendance as possible at public meetings, a comprehensive communications and outreach program will incorporate a broad range of communications and outreach activities:

### Study Web Site

A stand-alone Web site ([www.newburghareastudy.info](http://www.newburghareastudy.info)), which links to the Orange County Web site, has been developed and is maintained by Arch Street Communications to provide a focal point for the public and the media. This site will explain the Study, provide up-to-date information and materials developed through the Study, and invite site visitors to provide comments to the Study Team. The site will include meeting announcements, updates, electronic newsletters and other technical material. Using an opt-in feature, stakeholder information may be collected in a database for future outreach communications. In addition, the ability to provide comments without submitting name and address information will also be provided (see public involvement database, below).

### Study Newsletter

While the Web site provides essentially a continuous newsletter, up to four (4) newsletters will be created and distributed at key milestones during the course of the study. To save on postage costs and create the broadest distribution, newsletters will be designed for e-mail transmission in a format that is operating system and browser independent (i.e. PDF).

### Notices, Flyers

Notices and flyers will be created and posted on community bulletin boards and calendars or distributed in high traffic areas throughout the study area to inform the public of upcoming meetings and point to the Study Web site.

### E-mail notifications

An effort will be made to obtain e-mail addresses online and at meetings for future notifications to reduce postal costs and facilitate stakeholder communication.



## Media relations

Background information will be supplied to the media regarding the Study and to generate media placements regarding public meetings. Unless authorized by the OCPD Project Manager, the consultant team shall not speak for or make representations about the findings or conclusions of the study outside of the context of arranged public information meetings and those of the Study Advisory Group

Arch Street Communications will create a database of media contacts (print, radio and electronic) subject to OC Planning approval, including special interest media directed specifically to ethnic populations and those with limited English proficiency.

Area newspaper and newsletter editors will be provided with press releases about major milestones, meeting notices and meeting recaps and encouraged to publish such information to enhance the involvement process. News outlets will also be encouraged to direct their readers to the Study Web site.

Communications specialists for each of the municipalities in the study area will be contacted to educate them about the study and to enlist their help in communicating the information to their constituents. Notices and flyers regarding the meetings will be furnished to each specialist.

## Newspaper ads

Arch Street Communications, with OC Planning oversight and approval, will create and place ads, as necessary, to fulfill the study's notification requirements and to create broad awareness.

## Access to Materials

In addition to the Study Web site, which will be the primary access point for study information, paper copies of study materials will be available at Newburgh City Hall (planning office), the four Town Halls and at the Orange County Planning office in Goshen. This will enable public review of all Study documents

## Public Involvement Database

A database of persons and agencies interested in the study will be developed and updated on an ongoing basis. The database will be used to communicate with those who request to be placed on the Study's contact list. Those included on the list will receive periodic messages regarding the Study, such as updates and meeting notices.

Members of the public will be encouraged to join the study mailing list by way of comment forms distributed and collected at public meetings and through the study web site comment form.

The public involvement database may be supplemented by the names of residents and businesses in the study area, through available data sources. The list will also include the names of community groups and agencies. Names of individuals and groups representing the transit-dependent populations and disabled populations will be added to the database with assistance from Study Advisory Group members.