

MPACT Committee Guidelines and Procedures

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Mobilizing Public Access for Countywide Transportation (MPACT) committee is to identify mobility challenges in all of Yakima County (both urban and rural areas) and propose improvements that will result in a more effective and efficient public transportation system.

NATURE OF WORK

The committee will engage with Yakima County citizens and stakeholders who have knowledge and interest in identifying public transportation issues and needs. The objectives of this coordination are to:

- 1.) Identify public transportation issues and needs in Yakima County.
- 2.) Identify the major origins and destinations for potential users of the public transportation system.
- 3.) Document the public transportation services provided in Yakima County.
- 4.) Identify under-served population groups and what their public transportation needs are.

The committee will communicate and make recommendations for action to the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments' (YVCOG's) Transportation Policy Board. The objectives of this work shall be:

- 1.) Help service providers be responsive to the needs and interests of County citizens.
- 2.) Provide input in the development of the YVCOG's Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan (YVCOG HSTP) and amendments.
- 3.) Advise the Transportation Policy Board on prioritization recommendations for public transportation projects that are being submitted to Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for Consolidated Grant Program funding.
- 4.) Develop recommendations, as requested by the Transportation Policy Board, on plans, programs, and policies related to public transportation.

ONE OF TWO ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

MPACT is one of two official advisory committees to the Transportation Policy Board. The other advisory committee is the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The two committees have separate purposes and recommend projects for separate funding programs. However, the two advisory committees both have the common goal of improving transportation systems in Yakima County, so they have commonalities as well. This section shall define the distinct and common efforts the MPACT committee and the TAC have.

The TAC's major purpose is to advise and conduct work for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO - federal) and Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO - state) of Yakima County, under the umbrella of YVCOG. The MPO and RTPO receive federal and state planning funding (PL funding) to accomplish this work. Funding is granted through agreements between Washington State Department of Transportation and YVCOG. YVCOG assumes almost all federal and state mandated transportation planning efforts under a single contract (GCB 1777) with WSDOT and identifies the tasking to be undertaken in their annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). YVCOG's support for and administration of the TAC is an eligible expense through that funding. YVCOG assumes the role of

administering the MPACT committee through another contract with WSDOT (GCB 2369) which specifies the efforts to be accomplished with those funds. The funding sources provided to accomplish work by both committees are identified in the table below

Advisory Committee Customarily Associated with Funding Source

	FHWA PL funding	FTA PL funding	RTPO funding	HSTP funding
TAC	X			
MPACT				X
Both		X	X	

YVCOG, as the MPO/RTPO, also administers a number of processes that result in allocation of federal and state funding for regionally prioritized transportation projects/programs/planning efforts in the region. As with the source funding being sometimes distinctly associated with MPACT or TAC committees, so too are the prioritization processes distinctly associated with MPACT or TAC.

Specifically, YVCOG assumes the responsibility to administer prioritization processes for the following funding: Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding, Surface Transportation Block Grant Set-aside (STBG Set-aside) funding, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding, Human Services Transportation Plan. The responsibility for recommending the results of the prioritization process for those pass-through funds rest with the TAC and are approved by the Transportation Policy Board. The responsibilities for developing and recommending prioritized lists for these efforts are included in the table below for clarity.

YVCOG assumes the responsibility to administer a regional prioritization process for advising WSDOT about projects eligible for the state-wide Consolidated Public Transportation Grant process. A regional prioritization of eligible projects is performed by the MPACT committee and approved by the Transportation Policy Board before being forwarded to WSDOT. The prioritized project list is also included in the table below for clarity.

**Advisory Committee Customarily Associated with
Recommending Prioritized Project List to the Transportation Policy Board**

	STBG	STBG Set-aside	CMAQ	Consolidated Public Transportation Grant
TAC	X	X	X	
MPACT				X

MEMBERSHIP

The MPACT committee membership includes representation from organizations and agencies that have interest in public transportation including private and nonprofit transportation brokers and providers, local public transportation agencies, local government agencies, social and health service organizations, private business, emergency management organizations, and veteran organizations. All organizations and agencies must provide signatories to the MPACT Membership Agreement (Attachment A) to become members.

The MPACT committee is the body of members who have been appointed to represent member

agencies to carry out all delegated and administrative responsibilities as described in these guidelines. Each signatory member shall designate a member and alternate member who will have voting and office holding privileges.

A diverse makeup of MPACT members is desired to represent a wide range of communities and public transportation interests. There are no term requirements for membership.

OFFICERS

MPACT shall, by majority vote, select a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Each officer shall have a two-year term. Officer terms shall start at the beginning of the calendar year, at which time the election for officers that have completed their two-year terms shall take place.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall succeed to said office. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Vice Chair or Secretary, the committee shall hold an election to fill that position at an MPACT meeting directly following said vacancy.

The Chair shall represent MPACT and any recommendations the committee has approved to the Transportation Policy Board. The Vice-Chair shall represent MPACT in the absence of the Chair.

QUORUM

45% of the voting members of the MPACT membership shall constitute a quorum necessary for the transaction of any business that may come before any meeting of MPACT.

VOTING

Each member of MPACT shall be entitled to one (1) vote on any matter that may come before the committee. A simple majority vote of the quorum present shall be required to decide a question dealing with routine business of the committee, i.e., acceptance of minutes, requesting information, making recommendations to the Transportation Policy Board. Voting members must be in attendance at the meeting the vote is being called for, or take part in the meeting by conference call. Members may be allowed to present a minority opinion when a recommendation is being made by MPACT to the Transportation Policy Board.

MEETINGS

The MPACT committee shall meet on a regularly scheduled basis. All meeting dates shall be issued to the general public as described in YVCOG's Public Participation Plan. MPACT customarily meets quarterly. Additional meetings may be scheduled as the committee deems necessary such as for updating the Consolidated Public Transportation Human Services and ranking Consolidated Public Transportation Human Services regional projects.

SUB-COMMITTEES

The MPACT committee may recommend convening a subcommittee when intense work is required. If a subcommittee is recommended, the Chair shall appoint and establish the sub-committee. The sub-committee may be composed of members and non-members with particular knowledge or talent to contribute to the work of the sub-committee. Membership on subcommittees shall not include a quorum of the advisory committee. Once the subcommittee completes its assigned task, it will bring recommendations to the full MPACT committee for their consideration.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The meeting minutes and agenda shall be prepared by MPACT's secretary, with consultation from YVCOG's support staff and MPACT's Chair. These documents shall be distributed to MPACT committee membership electronically. YVCOG support staff shall retain a hard copy of these documents for public record retention purposes.

The agenda should be provided one week in advance of each regularly scheduled meeting. YVCOG staff participates with the committee Chair and Secretary to develop the agenda. The draft meeting minutes shall be reviewed and approved by the MPACT committee. The final version of MPACT meeting minutes shall be posted on the YVCOG website.

RULES OF ORDER AND MOTION PROCEDURES

MPACT meetings shall be conducted informally, in a manner that encourages regional discussion and collaboration, and follow standard procedures when making motions. The Roberts Rules of Order will be used to guide MPACT meetings when clarification is required on rules of order and/or motion procedures. The Committee's Conflict Resolution (Attachment B) shall be followed when a conflict occurs.

ADMINISTRATION AND OVERSIGHT

The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments provides administration and oversight for the MPACT committee as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization and Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

DEFINITIONS

Public transportation:

Any form of transportation that is accessible and available to the public that does not involve a single person in a motorized vehicle - such as buses, rail, bikes, and pedestrians. Public in this sense refers to the access to the service, not to the ownership of the system providing the service.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):

The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in Yakima County, Washington. The purpose of the MPO is to "carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) multimodal transportation planning process for the

Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) that encourages and promotes the safe and efficient development, management, and operation of surface transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people and freight and foster economic growth and development, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution..." (23 USC Section 134)

Lead planning agencies receive dedicated Federal Highway Funds known as Title 23 USC Planning Funds (PL) and transit planning funds known as Title 49 USC Section 53 Planning Funds (5303) to carry out their transportation programs. Reporting requirements for Federal Highway Funds are explained in 23 CFR 420.111. Funding is allocated through the state department of transportation based on a formula as described in 23 CFR 450.308 and is distributed on an annual basis tied to each MPO's annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Agencies participating as members of the MPO include the cities of Moxee, Selah, Union Gap, Naches, and Yakima; Yakima County; Selah Transit, Union Gap Transit, and Yakima Transit; and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO):

YVCOG is also the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) formed via the interlocal agreement of local governments within Yakima County. One of the purposes of an RTPO is to see that provisions of the Washington State Growth Management Act (RCW 47.80.023), as further defined under Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Section 468.86, are met.

The RTPO performs tasks similar to the MPO, but unlike the MPO, the RTPO includes rural and small urban areas outside of the greater metropolitan area. Often a MPO and a RTPO are combined to make transportation planning a coordinated and comprehensive process, as is the case in the Yakima Valley.

Funding for the RTPO is appropriated directly from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and is used to carry out the regional transportation planning program.

Agencies participating in the RTPO include those members of the MPO, along with the cities and towns of Grandview, Granger, Harrah, Mabton, Sunnyside, Tieton, Toppenish, Wapato, and Zillah.

ATTACHMENT A

MPACT MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

PURPOSE OF COALITION

The signing parties agree to participate in the Mobilizing Public Access for Countywide Transportation (MPACT) committee. The purpose of the committee is to identify mobility challenges in all of Yakima County (both urban and rural areas) and propose improvements that will result in a more effective and efficient public transportation system. It is the committee's intent to foster cooperation and collaboration among private and nonprofit transportation brokers and providers, local public transportation agencies, local government agencies, social and health service organizations, private business, emergency management organizations, and veteran organizations.

VISION FOR COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

We envision a system that:

- Serves all people with special transportation needs.
- Efficiently uses all community transportation resources, including non-traditional ones.
- Is easy to access, regardless of who needs the ride or is paying for the ride.
- Is integrated and interconnected.
- Contributes to a livable community, a vital economy, and a sustainable environment.

GOALS FOR COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The system shall:

- Be a collaborative process involving transportation providers, human service programs and agencies, consumers, social and health service providers, educational provider, employer and business representatives, and other affected parties.
- Be easy for customers to arrange and schedule trips regardless of who is paying for the ride.
- Promote program or agency responsibility to ensure that its customers can access services.
- Consider the cost of transportation when decisions are made on facility siting or program implementation. Others are given an opportunity to influence the decision if the potential impact is negative.
- Be open to all local providers who meet minimum standards for safety, driver training, maintenance, vehicles, and technology.
- Provide for cost comparisons so those purchasers can select the least expensive trip suitable to the customer's needs.
- Have flexibility in using the available vehicles in a community so that the ability to transport people is not restricted by categorical claims to vehicles.
- Avoid duplication of costly program elements through maximum sharing of operating facilities and administrative services.
- Allocate billing costs when trip sponsors and service providers have shared use of vehicles.
- Assist agencies to address coordination barriers and issues related to effective and efficient transportation.
- Identify internal organizational barriers to coordination.
- Promote and advocate for individuals with special transportation needs.

MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

Individuals representing themselves or appointed to represent their organization or sector of interest shall have the following responsibilities:

- To serve as an official representative of the member organization.
- To attend committee meetings regularly.
- To support the Human Service Transportation Plan updates.
- To offer opinions and advice that supports the purpose, vision, and goals of the committee.
- To inform the member organization of the work and function of the committee.

The undersigned do hereby agree to become a member and participate in the MPACT committee to actively support the Vision and Goals of the committee and to adhere to the Organizational Guidelines.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Organization: _____

ATTACHMENT B

Mobilizing Public Access Countywide Transportation (MPACT)

Yakima Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Conflict Resolution Policy

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Background

The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments is the lead planning agency for the federally designated Yakima Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the state-designated Yakima Valley Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). The purpose of the MPO is to “carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) multimodal transportation planning process for the Metropolitan Planning Area. The RTPO performs tasks similar to the MPO, but unlike the MPO, the RTPO includes rural and small urban areas outside of the greater metropolitan area.

The Transportation Policy Board appointed a Technical Advisory Committee to conduct public transportation planning and advise the Transportation Policy Board regarding plans, programs, and policies related to public transportation in this region. Members of this Coalition decided to name the group MPACT (Mobilizing Public Access Countywide Transportation) at their May 11, 2016 meeting.

The MPACT committee consists of varied memberships representing multi-faceted interests and disciplines. Conflicting ideas, goals, and methodologies will likely arise from the different members working on MPO/RTPO tasks. It is the intention of this Conflict Resolution Policy to guide the Acting Chair towards resolution when conflict occurs.

Interest-Based Relational Approach

The "Interest-Based Relational (IBR) Approach" to conflict resolution respects individual differences while helping people avoid becoming too entrenched in a fixed position. The following guidelines are used in this approach:

- **Make sure that good relationships are the first priority:** As far as possible, the group ensures each member treats others calmly and that the group tries to build mutual respect. The group does its best to be courteous to one-another and remain constructive under pressure.
- **Keep people and problems separate:** Recognize that in many cases other members are not just "being difficult" – real and valid differences can lie behind conflictive positions. By separating the problem from the person, real issues can be debated without damaging working relationships.
- **Pay attention to the interests that are being presented:** By listening carefully the group will most-likely understand why each member is adopting his or her position.
- **Listen first; talk second:** To solve a problem effectively each member has to understand where others are coming from before defending conflictive positions.
- **Set out the "Facts":** Agree and establish the objective, observable elements that will have an impact on the decision.
- **Explore options together:** Be open to the idea that a myriad of positions may exist, and that the group can get to a resolution cooperatively.

By following these guidelines, members can often keep contentious discussions positive and constructive.

This helps to prevent the antagonism and dislike which so-often causes conflict to spin out of control.

Each Member's Responsibilities

When a conflict occurs, the group should:

- Clearly articulate the causes of the conflict – openly acknowledging there will be differing perceptions of the problem(s).
 - Make a clear statement of why the group wants the conflict resolved and reasons to work on conflict.
 - Communication of how the group wants the conflict resolved.
 - Address the issues face-to-face if notes, email correspondence, memos have not productively resolved the difference.
 - Stick to the issues. In trying to resolve conflict, it is tempting to resort to name calling or bring up issues from the past. It is important to address specific behaviors and situations if change is to take place.
 - Take time out if necessary. In the resolution of a conflict, our emotions may interfere with arriving at a productive resolution. If this transpires, the group can take a time-out and resume resolving the conflict at another designated time.
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Conflict Resolution Steps

Step One: Set the Scene

The Chair will express the following types of statements:

- “We have a conflict.”
- “It’s okay to have different opinions, it makes the group stronger.”
- “Everyone here is important to our group and needs to be respected and heard.”
- “We will come to an agreement on:
 - What the conflict is.
 - Why it should be resolved.
 - How and when it should be resolved.

If the Chair is involved in the conflict, the Chair will suggest an alternate to mediate the conflict.

Step Two: Gather Information

The Chair will ask for each member's viewpoint to get to the underlying interests, needs, and concerns:

- “Everyone will have an opportunity to speak, but they must be respectful, stick to the issue, talk slowly, and clearly. Try using “I” statements instead of “you” statements when you speak.”
- “When others speak, try to listen with empathy and see their point of view. Try to be calm, patient, and respectful.”

- “What do you think the conflict is?” Sometimes different people will see different but interlocking problems – if the group can't reach a common perception of the problem, then at the very least, the group needs to understand what others see as the problem.
- “Why should the conflict be resolved?”
- “How and when should the conflict be resolved?”

The Chair will use [active listening](#) skills to ensure the group hears and understands all positions and perceptions that include: restate, paraphrase, and summarize.

Each member will try to understand other’s motivations and goals, and see how individual or group actions may be affecting these. Listen with empathy and see the conflict from others’ points of view. Also, try to understand the conflict in objective terms: Is it affecting work performance? Damaging the delivery of tasking? Disrupting team work? Hampering decision-making? Focus on work issues and leave personalities out of the discussion.

Step Three: Brainstorm Possible Solutions

If the entire group is going to feel satisfied with the resolution, it will help if all members have fair input in generating solutions. Brainstorm possible solutions, and be open to all ideas, including ones members haven’t considered before.

Step Four: Negotiate a Solution

By this stage, the conflict may be resolved: The group may better understand the position of other members, and a mutually satisfactory solution may be clear to all.

However real differences may have been uncovered between member’s positions. This is where a technique like [win-win negotiation](#) can be useful to find a solution that, at least to some extent, satisfies everyone in the group. There are three guiding principles here: Be Calm, Be Patient, Have Respect.

If This Process Does Not Resolve the Conflict

Tasks undertaken by the MPO/RTPO are based in federal or state requirements; completing tasks is not optional. The formation of a committee or sub-committee is time-intensive and an investment of time and resources. Because federal and state regulations are clear on MPO’s and RTPO’s performing cooperative, continuing, and comprehensive planning, if conflict in a group can’t be resolved internally, the Transportation Policy Board will bring in external assistance in resolving conflicts in a respectful and constructive manner. Washington State Department of Transportation provides guidance to the Transportation Policy Board and is the logical next source that will be sought for assistance. External private mediation is another option should the conflict need further effort.