

Sounding Board Charge and Protocols

March 2, 2021

Charge

Clark County is developing a new Transportation System Plan (TSP) that will help inform transportation decisions. A change to Clark County's transportation network can affect the performance of a street miles away. The TSP will examine how our traffic functions, while providing analysis on maintaining and improving the system for a growing population. A TSP will provide direct guidance on how to build, operate and maintain Clark County's major roadway network, while addressing complementary elements of the larger transportation system including transit, multi-use trails, state highways and freight railroads maintained by other entities. A [public participation plan](#) was adopted through Resolution No. 2020-0301. The resolution establishes a Sounding Board for members to advise the development of the TSP.

The TSP Sounding Board is charged with:

- Learning about the TSP and providing input to the Project Management Team to inform them how to development the TSP.
- Acting as a liaison with representative committees, providing information and soliciting feedback to keep those groups informed and engaged.
- Provide perspectives, challenges and advise to develop a robust transportation system.
- Provide advice and input on how to engage other community members.
- Provide input to help synthesize broader community feedback at milestones.

The Sounding Board will discuss ideas, public input and recommendations. Points of consensus will be recognized and documented in meeting summaries but will not be requisite for advancing the TSP.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Sounding Board is comprised of members of established Clark County advisory boards and committees. The Sounding Board will include committee membership from:

- 1 representative of the Clark Communities Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee,
- 1 representative of the Commission on Aging,
- 1 representative of the Parks Advisory Board,
- 1 representative of the Community Action Advisory Board,
- 1 representative of the Planning Commission,
- 1 representative of the Development and Engineering Advisory Board,
- 1 representative of the Development Disabilities Advisory Board,
- 1 representative of the Clark County Public Health Advisory Council,
- 1 representative from the Cowlitz Indian Tribe,
- 1 representative from the Nisqually Indian Tribe,
- 1 representative of the Railroad Advisory Board, and
- 1 representative from the Regional Transportation Council (RTC).

Members of the Sounding Board will:

- Attend up to 10 meetings between April 2021 and December 2021. If a member cannot attend a meeting, an alternate, who is also a member of the represented group, may attend.
- Actively participate in the projects by contributing to project meetings and reviewing materials before meetings.
- Abide by the agreed upon meeting guidelines.
- Act as a liaison between the represented group and the project. Share information with the project team.
- Ask questions and seek information to ensure understanding. Express concerns, issues, and perspectives clearly, honestly, and early in the process.
- Share differences of opinion on ideas – silence is considered consent.
- Help create an atmosphere in which differences can be raised, discussed, and melded into group decisions. Divergent views and opinions are expected and are to be respected.

The facilitator will:

- Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate.
- Keep meetings moving and focused on the agenda.
- Start and end meetings on time unless the group agrees to extend the meeting time.
- Maintain an ongoing list of off-agenda topics to be addressed as time permits.

Protocols

- As a rule, meeting materials will be distributed by e-mail one week in advance of meetings. In some cases, additional materials may need to be distributed at the meetings.
- Discussions will be facilitated.
- Consensus is not required to move forward.
- Meetings will begin and end on time. If agenda items cannot be completed on time, the group will decide if the meeting should be extended or if an additional meeting should be scheduled.
- Brief summaries will be prepared for each meeting. These summaries are intended to be an overview of the meeting and Sounding Board discussions.
- At the meetings, Sounding Board members will:
 - Share the available speaking time and be respectful of a range of opinions
 - Focus on successfully completing the agreed upon agenda
 - Avoid side discussions when others are speaking
 - Voice concerns and complaints at the meeting where they can be directly addressed rather than outside the meeting
 - Put phones on silent

Members of the public are invited to attend Sounding Board meetings. The Sounding Board will not hear public comment.

Sounding Board input

A Sounding Board is a committee structure designed to encourage discussion and structured engagement, but it is not an advisory committee. As such, the Sounding Board will not make recommendations to the County Council, but will provide meaningful feedback to form the TSP. The Sounding Board input is important to the process.

All Sounding Board input will be recorded and considered by the project team along with all other input received.

The facilitator will recognize consensus as it occurs during the discussion making process, although, consensus is not required to move forward.

Communications outside meetings

- Sounding Board members are encouraged to share the committee's progress with their respective constituencies at meetings, by e-mail or through newsletters.
- Sounding Board members are responsible for providing the facilitator with information they believe other committee members should have.
- Sounding Board members will strive to communicate outside meetings in ways that support the group process. This includes contacts with each other, with officials, with other community members, and with the media.
- Meeting facilitator will be responsible for distributing information to Sounding Board members so everyone has the same information. Relevant discussions of project issues should occur at the Sounding Board table to allow all members and the Project Management Team to be informed and participate.
- If contacted by the media, Sounding Board members will forward media requests to Magan Reed. If members do speak to the media, they do so only on their own behalf and not on behalf of the group about this project.