

Dodge City Public Transportation Program Public Participation Plan (PPP)

1. Brief description of Provider's activities and services

Dodge City Public Transportation serves Dodge City and Ford County, Kansas. Currently, D-Tran Fixed Route bus service consists of three bus routes and 65 designated stops located throughout Dodge City. Busses arrive at each stop every hour on the hour from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Para-Tran is an origin to destination paratransit service available for persons who, because of a disability, are unable to use the D-Tran Fixed Route Bus Service. The Para-Tran service area is within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of D-Tran routes. R-Tran is for Regional Demand Response service outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile Para-Tran zone, and up to 2 miles beyond the city limits.

2. Brief description of activities that would warrant public participation (i.e. fare changes, changes to service hours, route adjustments, service area changes).

This change will warrant public participation as we currently operate a Fixed Bus Route Service to our Public Transportation program and could expect some changes which are listed below:

- Adjustments of routes
- Determining location of bus stop
- Changes in Fares or Discounts
- Hours of operation
- Determine eligibility for parallel Paratransit/Demand Response service for persons Unable to use Fixed Route buses.

3. Brief description of the proactive public participation strategies to be used.

Public Participation will be enabled through the following processes:

- **Greet, Meet and Inform**

Purpose- Public Transportation intends to provide a location and time for the community to give input on the current Transportation program and how we can better serve our community.

Frequency and Time of Meetings- Dodge City Public Transportation holds drivers' meetings monthly and would allow public or transportation participants to attend for the first 30 minutes of the meetings to bring forth any question, concerns or suggestions to our program. Dodge City Commissioners' meetings are also held every other Monday with Public Hearing for the first 5 minutes of each scheduled meeting.

- **Use of social media and Online Participation Methods**

Purpose- Because participation preferences are changing among some population groups, we will consider disseminating information and gathering input through such mechanisms as Facebook, Twitter, and Online Participation methods. This could include posting relevant information on agency website and including methods for submitting public comments.

- **Employ Public-Friendly Methods for Engaging Groups**

- Employ visual techniques, when possible, to depict the agency’s activities/materials to the public (i.e., charts, graphs, photo interpretation, maps, use of GIS, artist’s renderings, physical models)
- Utilize a variety of advertising platforms (i.e., newspaper, notices on public transportation vehicle, social media, website, local radio, and cable television)

4. Brief description of **Outreach methods to engage minority and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals** (i.e. translation of public meeting materials, providing translation services if requested, targeted media messages in low income neighborhoods of service area, work with existing neighborhood and advocacy organizations)

Spanish speakers who speak English “less than very well” make up 23% of Dodge City’s population and meet the threshold for LEP.

- All Public Transportation Program **materials will be made available in Spanish** as well as English, including all Title VI materials and everything on our website.
- Public Meetings held in English will also have a **Spanish speaking co-facilitator** who can translate should this be necessary
- **Civic Educational Meetings will be held in Spanish** at a different time and location so that the large number of Spanish speakers in our community can easily participate in learning about Dodge City Public Transportation. An English-speaking co-facilitator will be present who can translate should this be necessary.
- **We seek input and collaboration from organizations** which come into frequent contact with LEP people in our community. Examples of such organizations are:
 - United Way of Dodge City
 - Manna House of Dodge City
 - Catholic Social service come into frequent contact with LEP individuals through the various services and programs they provide.
 - Compass and Mental Health of Dodge City
 - Arrowhead West of Dodge City
 - Engage in Dodge
- When requested, we **provide assistance in Spanish** by utilizing our Spanish speaking staff, including some Drivers and Dispatchers. When persons seek assistance in languages other than Spanish, we will utilize the **online and telephone interpreter and translation services of Language Line Solutions** at www.language.com.

5. Brief description of the **desired outcomes of the agency’s public participation efforts.**

Desired outcomes of the agency’s public participation efforts:

- The Public Transportation Program will have an improved understanding of the transportation needs.
- Direct feedback regarding the quality and effectiveness of the Public Transportation services being provided will give us the necessary information to improve the quality and effectiveness of our program
- High quality and timely feedback from the public will help the Public Transportation Program achieve more effective and efficient services.
- Enhanced awareness throughout the community of the services provided by the Public Transportation Program will help overcome objections and misunderstandings, increase utilization of our services, and build community-wide support for the program.
- Greater acceptance of changes (e.g., placement of bus stops in neighborhoods) because the public has been consulted and helped shape the changes.

- A well-informed public effectively engaged with development of the Public Transportation Program will become advocates for the program with public officials as they consider annual budgets and program changes.
- Effectively engaging targeted population groups will help assure the Public Transportation Program is providing full and open access to all.

6. Brief summary of recent outreach efforts over the past three years.

On Going Communication- Dodge City Public Transportation program continues to communicate with these businesses on an ongoing basis to collaborate on how we can better serve our community.

- City of Dodge City
- Cargill, Western Plains Medical Center, National Beef (major employers)
- Ford County Government
- Ford County Council on Aging
- Dodge City Community College
- Dodge City/Ford County Economic Development Corporation
- Dodge City Medical Center
- Dodge City Parks & Recreation
- Boot Hill Casino and Convention Center

Public Meetings (2019-Present) – As Public Transportation Program continues to service the community, we have attended meetings, seminars, trainings and expos to inform the community of our public service.

Groups participating included:

- Various Age Groups – Senior Citizens, Youth, Working Age
- Persons with Disabilities
- Community Service Volunteers
- Social Service Agencies
- Employers
- Elected Officials
- Educational Institutions
- Participants in English as a Second Language Programs
- Public Transportation Participants
- Various Population Groups – Hispanics, African Americans, Caucasians, non- English speakers, Recent Immigrants

Engage Dodge Program Participation- Engage Dodge is a community outreach program that is designed to inform the public about the services the City of Dodge City provides to its citizens. This program aims to enhance awareness of the functions, responsibilities, and impact of various City departments, providing participants with a deeper understanding of the local government operations, departmental budgets, and the challenges faced in serving the community. The Transportation Department participates in this program by giving an explanation about each service it offers and how to obtain service during a presentation. Through discussions and information sharing, Engage Dodge fosters open communication between participants and City staff while promoting volunteerism, civic engagement, and professional development. Participants gain valuable insights into proper channels for advocacy and develop a stronger connection to their community through this unique opportunity. This presentation is given in English and Spanish, and the participants include high school students, Adult Learning Center students, members of the community, and Citizenship scholarship recipients. Over the past two years there have been multiple sessions held in

September, October, and November of 2023, and April, May, October and November of 2024, below are the most recent listed dates and times of the meetings:

Engage Dodge: October 8th, 10th, 15th, 17th, and 21st from 6:00PM to 8:00PM

Engage Dodge on Wheels: October 30th from 8:00AM to 2:30PM

November 6th from 8:00AM to 2:30PM

Local Newspaper Articles and Advertisements – Each year approximately 20 Public Transportation program display posters are placed in high traffic areas around the community and Dodge City Public Transportation Ads are placed monthly in the Dodge City Daily Globe newspaper.

Radio Interviews – In 2024, 30-minute radio interviews with the Public Service Specialist, Collin Clark, have been conducted on two separate occasions in the Community News program at local radio station K95. These were done to spread awareness of the Dodge City Public Transportation Program and upcoming events.