

Moving Dutchess Forward Virtual Public Meeting Notes

March 11, 2021 | 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Introduction

On March 11, 2021, the Dutchess County Transportation Council (DCTC) held a virtual public meeting for *Moving Dutchess Forward*, its new Long Range Transportation Plan. This meeting was held as an opportunity for the public to learn about and provide input on the Plan, which is currently in development.

The meeting was originally intended to be an in-person event. However, due to the ongoing COVID public health emergency, the DCTC made the decision to conduct meetings virtually.

The DCTC used various methods to advertise the virtual meeting, including emails distributed to DCTC's contact list (which included a broad list of stakeholders and media contacts) and social media announcements on Dutchess County's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

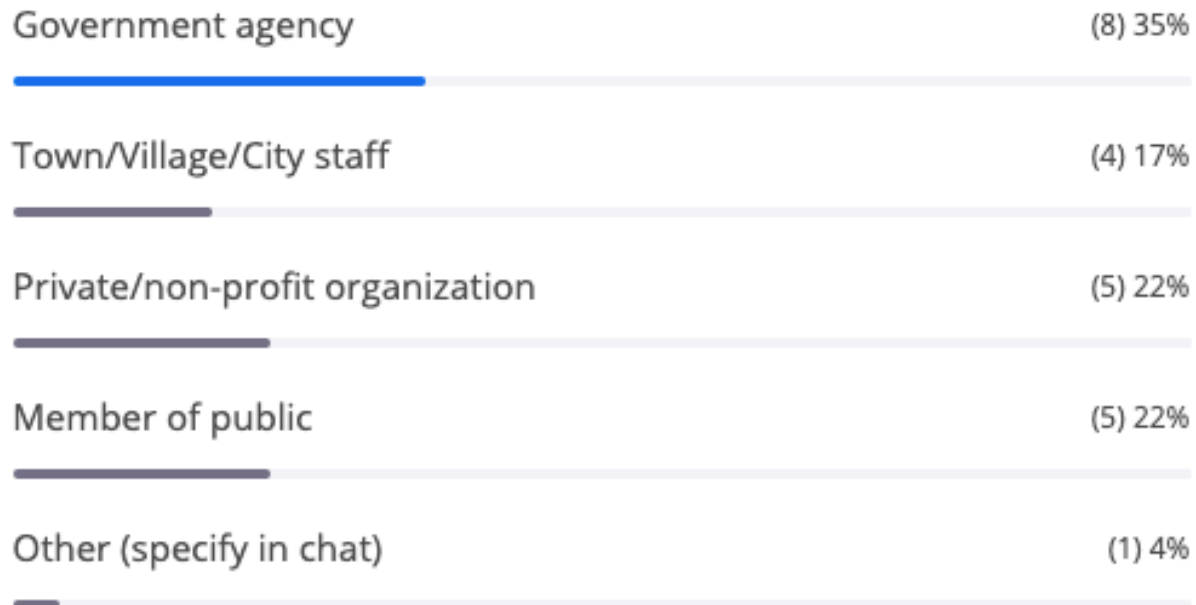
The meeting was hosted on Zoom. Those interested in attending were required to register in advance to obtain instructions for participating in the event. A total of 67 people registered for the meeting, including project team members. The meeting was attended by 43 participants, including project team members.

As attendees logged in, they were placed on mute to diminish background noise; they were asked to provide any comments and questions via the Zoom chat window or to raise their hands to speak.

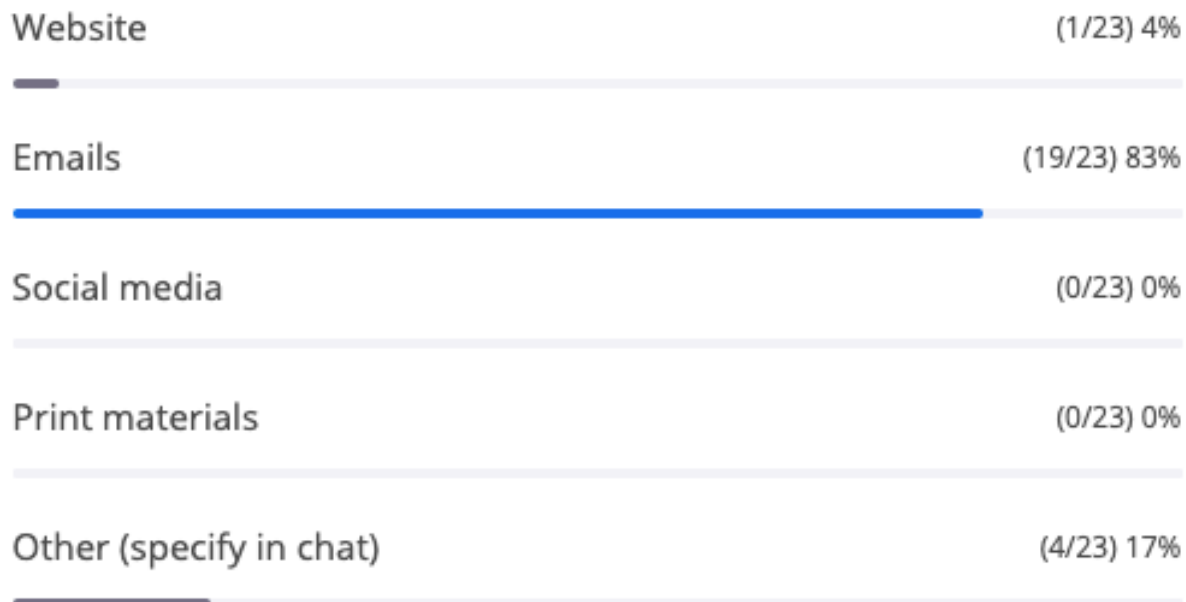
Staff used a PowerPoint presentation to engage participants. The presentation included background materials about the DCTC and information on the ongoing development of *Moving Dutchess Forward*. Poll questions were built into the presentation, allowing attendees to provide live feedback. Responses to the polls are shown below. A question-and-answer period followed the presentation. Highlights from that discussion are also listed below.

A copy of the presentation and full recording of the meeting was also posted to the project website, <https://movingdutchessforward.com/resource-library/>.

Poll Question 1: What group do you represent?



Poll Question 2: How did you hear about *Moving Dutchess Forward*?



Other responses:

- My husband told me about it.
- I was invited here by my college's geography department.

Poll Question 3: What should a long-range transportation plan include?

Responses

- Walking paths among municipalities that allow people to get from town to town on foot.
- Alternative Transportation Strategies!
- EV charging stations, bike paths, pedestrian paths.
- Accessible and more availability for employment.
- Widely available and modern mass transit that helps low-income, disabled, elderly, and children get where they want to go without needing a car.
- Closing city centers to motor vehicles.
- County wide intermodal.

Poll Question 4: What do you want to learn today?

Responses

- Where are we in this process?
- How community engagement in metropolitan planning works.
- What's in the plan so far?
- I want to learn. For whatever it's worth, it's unfortunate that a 71-year-old senior citizen is stuck in the bureaucracy of not being able to take provided resources to Planet Fitness, just outside of a tax issue, even worse due to COVID, a senior be temporarily considered.
- How do we influence the decisions?
- Goals and how to achieve them.

Poll Question 5: What barriers affect your daily life the most? (Pick top 3)

No access to public transportation or limited transit routes or schedules (12/26) 46%



Lack of sidewalks/crosswalks/safe walking routes (15/26) 58%



Personal safety concerns (1/26) 4%



Lack of safe bicycling routes (11/26) 42%



Congestion/traffic issues (12/26) 46%



Lack of a vehicle/unable to drive (3/26) 12%



Too far/takes too long to get to common destinations (4/26) 15%



Lack of accessibility (for wheelchairs, strollers, persons with disabilities, etc) (3/26) 12%



Safety of the roads (7/26) 27%



Q&A

Has there been direct mail, email to people who participated in public, in-person meetings prior to c/PK and County bus merger?

- Anyone who participated in public, in-person meetings related to the bus consolidation and signed up for our email list would be included on our contact list, which we are using for this Plan. As far as direct mail, we reached out to local municipalities and organizations to provide them with printed materials if they were interested.

Can you share your opinion on what you and the team feel the ideal outcome of this plan would be?

- The outcome would be a set of policies and transformative projects that would remove barriers to access. In addition, the Plan will have a financial plan to address funding.
- We hope that this Plan stands the test of time. The digital format allows us to be flexible and make changes.
- Part of the plan is influencing how the DCTC does business, in terms of looking at equity and the transportation challenges that people face across the county. We hope to better prioritize the federal funding we receive to address areas of the county and populations that have been overlooked in years past.
- We are also developing recommendations for local municipalities to allow them to better serve their communities.

I noticed I-84 & 9D intersection as the top vehicle “congestion” point in the presentation - or at least one of the top ones. Ferry & Beacon Line rail activation & 24/7 bike+ped bridge lanes will move 1,000s/day on modes other than vehicles. How far along are plans to bolster the Beacon Line, ferry, and 24/7 bridge access for pets & cyclists here?

- That area is a high congestion location based on our analysis. We are not aware of any plans related to the ferry. As for the Beacon line, there is interest in converting this to a rail trail. This is not far along at this point but definitely of interest.

How, if at all, are you accounting for the long-term conflict between continued fossil-fuel use (especially in trucks and cars) and human and ecological health?

- We spend a lot of time talking about non-motorized transportation and transit in the Plan. The Plan also advocates for development in existing centers and the preservation of open space to reduce impacts on the environment including climate change.
- The Plan also talks about vehicle technology and recommends that municipalities make sure EV charging stations are more widely available. In addition, it suggests adding more EVs to municipal fleets.
- The Plan also encourages municipal partners to update their zoning to encourage more housing options in existing centers so that residents do not have to rely so much on cars.

In terms of various transportation projects, where are you at in terms of design phase and when we can start putting some of these projects out for RFPs?

- This is a long-range plan, and it is policy focused. It will include some transformative projects but we are not at the stage of identifying projects yet. Our 5-year capital program, the TIP, is more related to your question.

Curious also how the shift away from asphalt & concrete roadway infrastructure to brick, stone, and other fossil-free infrastructure is unfolding for the long term, with potential center-city projects the most obvious opportunities for the short term. Remove asphalt from Poughkeepsie, e.g, and you'll find Belgian blocks and bricks underneath the asphalt.

- From a planning perspective, we are not recommending new roads. We have to maintain what we have, which is a challenge because of limited funding. Construction details such as the materials used are worked out by project sponsors at the project level.