



River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN



Adopted by the River to Sea TPO Board on
2014

This document was financed, in part, by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Florida Department of Transportation and the participating Local Governments.

RIVER TO SEA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION 2014-##

RESOLUTION OF THE RIVER TO SEA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION ADOPTING THE RIVER TO SEA TPO'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

WHEREAS, United States Code of Federal Regulations 23 U.S.C. 450.316 requires that the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization develop a Public Participation Plan that lays out the processes and protocols for engaging the general public in the plans and programs of the River to Sea TPO; and

WHEREAS, the River to Sea TPO is the duly designated and constituted body responsible for carrying out the urban transportation planning and programming process for Volusia County, portions of Flagler County and the cities of Flagler Beach, Beverly Beach, Palm Coast and Bunnell in Flagler County; and

WHEREAS, the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization has developed a Public Participation Plan that has been provided for review by the general public during a 45-day period as required, the River to Sea TPO's Advisory Committees and the River to Sea TPO Board:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the River to Sea TPO that the:

1. River to Sea TPO Board and advisory committees have reviewed and endorsed the draft Public Participation Plan;
2. River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization's Public Participation Plan is hereby endorsed and adopted; and the
3. Chairperson of the River to Sea TPO (or her designee) is hereby authorized and directed to submit the Public Participation Plan to the:
 - a. Florida Department of Transportation; and
 - b. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) (through the Florida Department of Transportation); and
 - c. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (through the Florida Department of Transportation).

DONE AND RESOLVED at the regularly convened meeting of the River to Sea TPO held on the day of.

RIVER TO SEA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**City of South Daytona Vice Mayor Nancy Long
Chairperson, River to Sea TPO**

CERTIFICATE

The undersigned duly qualified and acting Recording Secretary of the River to Sea TPO certified that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution, adopted at a legally convened meeting of the River to Sea TPO held on.

ATTEST:

**Pamela Blankenship, Recording Secretary
River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization**

FOREWORD

On January 18, 1977, a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was established with a jurisdiction encompassing Daytona Beach and the surrounding coastal area of Volusia County. The organization became known as the Volusia Coastal Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

However, as growth occurred over the next decade, the need to expand the MPO planning boundary was recognized. In 1988, the Governor of Florida approved a request to expand the MPO's study boundary to include the entire area contained within Volusia County. In recognition of the MPO expanding its study boundary to cover the entire county, the name of the organization was changed to the Volusia County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

As a result of the 2000 Census, it was determined that the Volusia County Metropolitan Planning Organization would need to expand its planning boundaries once again. On January 27, 2004, the MPO welcomed the cities of Flagler Beach and Beverly Beach in Flagler County to its membership. The TPO Board launched a new website and introduced a new name and logo in the summer of 2010.

Following the 2010 Decennial Census, the Bureau of the Census identified a new urbanized area contiguous to the Daytona Beach – Port Orange Urbanized Area, but extending beyond the Volusia TPO's existing planning area boundary. On November 2, 2012, the Florida Department of Transportation officially notified the Volusia TPO that it was required to adjust its planning area boundary outward to encompass the expanded Daytona Beach – Port Orange Urbanized Area. This expanded urban area is now identified as the Palm Coast – Daytona Beach – Port Orange Urbanized Area recognizing that Palm Coast is the most populous municipality within the area. As part of the reapportionment process the TPO renamed itself the River to Sea TPO and launched a new logo.

RIVER TO SEA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

BOARD MEMBERS

Chairperson

Vice Mayor Nancy Long
City of South Daytona

1st Vice Chairperson

Council Member Patricia Northey
Volusia County Council, District 5

2nd Vice Chairman

Council Member Pat Patterson
Volusia County Council, District 1

Mayor Jim Ardell
Town of Beverly Beach

Vice Mayor John Rogers
City of Bunnell

Commissioner Robert Gilliland
City of Daytona Beach

Mayor Harry Jennings
City of Daytona Beach Shores

Council Member Lita Handy-Peters
City of DeBary

Mayor Pro Tem Leigh Matusick
City of DeLand

Mayor John Masiarczyk
City of Deltona

Councilman Gene Emter
City of Edgewater

Commissioner Marshall Shupe
City of Flagler Beach

Commissioner Barbara Revels
Flagler County

Commissioner Penny Currie
City of Holly Hill

Commissioner Rick Basso
City of Lake Helen

Vice Mayor Jason McGuirk
City of New Smyrna Beach

Mayor Doug Gibson
City of Oak Hill

Council Member Ron Saylor
City of Orange City

Mayor Ed Kelley
City of Ormond Beach

Vice Mayor Jason DeLorenzo
City of Palm Coast

Mayor James Sowell
Town of Pierson

Council Member Joe Perrone
Town of Ponce Inlet

Commissioner Robert Ford
City of Port Orange

Council Member Joyce Cusack
Volusia County Council, At-Large

Council Member Joshua Wagner
Volusia County Council, District 2

Council Member Deb Denys
Volusia County Council, District 3

Council Member Doug Daniels
Volusia County Council, District 4

Claudia Calzaretta
FDOT District 5
(non-voting advisor)

Linda Costello
Volusia County School Board
(non-voting)

Vacant
Flagler County School Board
(non-voting)

Clay Ervin
TCC Chairman (non-voting)

Gilles Blais
CAC Chairman (non-voting)

Bob Storke
BPAC Chairman (non-voting)

TPO STAFF MEMBERS

Lois Bollenback
Executive Director

Robert A. Keeth, AICP
Senior Planner

Vacant
Transportation Planner

Carole M. Hinkley
Transit Planner

Pamela C. Blankenship
Office Manager

Herbert M. Seely
Chief Financial Officer

Jean Parlow
Database Manager/Planner

Stephan C. Harris
Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator

Debbie Stewart
Administrative Assistant

RIVER TO SEA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS	4
TPO BOARD, COMMITTEES AND STAFF	6
<i>River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)</i>	7
<i>Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)</i>	7
<i>Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)</i>	7
<i>Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)</i>	8
<i>Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB)</i>	8
<i>Specialized Committees, Subcommittees and Working Groups</i>	9
<i>TPO Staff and the Public Involvement Coordinator</i>	9
TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND DOCUMENTS	11
<i>Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)</i>	11
<i>Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)</i>	12
<i>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Priority Process</i>	12
<i>Transit Development Plan (TDP) & Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)</i>	13
<i>Congestion Management Process (CMP)</i>	15
<i>TPO Public Participation Plan (PPP)</i>	15
<i>Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan</i>	15
<i>Title VI Program</i>	16
<i>Limited English Proficiency Plan</i>	16
<i>Miscellaneous Planning Studies</i>	16
ONGOING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES	17
<i>River to Sea TPO Website</i>	17
<i>Social Media</i>	17
<i>TPO Master Database and Email Contact List</i>	18
<i>Notification of Meetings, Workshops and Special Events</i>	18
<i>Public Meeting and Hearings</i>	18
<i>Comment Forms</i>	19
<i>TPO Logo</i>	19
<i>News Articles, Press Releases and Public Service Announcements</i>	19
<i>Printed Materials & Promotional Items</i>	20
<i>Project Workshops, Community Presentations and Special Events</i>	20
SOCIO-CULTURAL EFFECTS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	21
COORDINATED ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	21

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES.....	22
<i>TPO Policy Statement Regarding Public Participation</i>	22
<i>Public Participation Goal, Objectives and Policies</i>	22
MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS	25
SUMMARY.....	28
DOCUMENT REVIEW AND ADVERTISING SCHEDULE.....	29
APPENDICES	33

RIVER TO SEA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Transportation considerations are a major factor when people consider both *how* and *where* they live, work, shop, and plan their free time. The River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) recognizes the impact of transportation on the quality of life for residents throughout the TPO planning area. The TPO also recognizes the importance of the quality of experience enjoyed by visitors to the area when it comes to transportation issues and concerns. Members of the TPO Board, staff and committees work diligently to make the decisions necessary to develop a transportation system that will serve the public in ways that will benefit all travelers.

Making sound decisions about transportation requires gathering a great deal of information. The TPO staff and committee members review details regarding the demographics of our community, traffic data, financial forecasts and transportation legislation to gain a better understanding of the needs and options available for improving the way we travel. Although the review of this technical information is understood to be important, the River to Sea TPO has long recognized that an equally critical component to the planning process is the input provided by the public.

Acknowledging the need to seek public input, the River to Sea TPO has developed a Public Participation Plan that outlines the strategies developed to ensure public participation activities that are both meaningful and inclusive. The process seeks to establish a framework of activities that meets or exceeds the requirements outlined in the applicable federal and state guidelines. In addition, the process provides direction to the TPO regarding its public involvement activities and includes all of the guidance necessary for conducting and assessing the public participation strategies utilized for four main areas of TPO activity:

1. Within the formal structure of the TPO Board and advisory committees, subcommittees, and working groups;
2. During the development of major planning documents such as the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Priority Project Lists;
3. As a part of special projects, planning activities and studies including those that involve Votran, the local area transit provider; and
4. Incorporating public participation strategies into the ongoing, daily activities of the TPO.

Additionally, this plan provides information regarding the relationship between socio-cultural effects (SCE) and public participation as well as a brief overview of the coordinated activities contained within public participation. It establishes public participation procedures by issuing a policy statement regarding public participation, outlining the goals, objectives and policies of the process and determining the measures of effectiveness necessary for gauging the success of the process.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

The 1962 Federal Aid Highway Act mandated that all urbanized areas having a population of 50,000 or more establish a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3-C) planning process in order to be eligible to receive U.S. Department of Transportation funding. Subsequent revisions to the act formalized the process further by establishing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to manage the 3-C planning activities. While the 3-C planning process has always included provisions for citizen input, public participation activities were somewhat limited in earlier transportation planning legislative acts.

In 1991, sweeping transportation legislation was enacted, which placed a greater emphasis on public participation activities. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) introduced a comprehensive approach for addressing transportation issues that emphasized innovative, multimodal solutions to our traffic dilemmas. In addition, the legislation required that public participation be an integral part of the transportation planning, programming and project development process.

On August 10, 2005, the transportation bill entitled the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU) was adopted. This bill reasserted the principles that were established in ISTEA in 1991 and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) which was adopted in 1998. MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (P.L. 112-141), was signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012. MAP-21 extended the current law (SAFETEA-LU) for the remainder of FY 2012, with new provisions for FY 2013 and beyond taking effect on October 1, 2012.

Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 450.316(a), the *Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process*, sets forth the requirements for the public involvement process in conjunction with all aspects of transportation planning of a Transportation Planning Organization or Metropolitan Planning Organization. The regulation states that the MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. This includes:

- A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the TPO Board;
- Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
- Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;

- Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes;
- Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems including, but not limited to, low-income and minority households;
- When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) conformity regulations, a summary, analysis and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP;
- If the final transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the TPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available;
- Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the TPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all;
- These procedures will be reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) during certification reviews for Transportation Management Areas (TMA), and as otherwise necessary for all TPOs, to assure that full and open access is provided to the TPO decision-making processes; and
- Metropolitan public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.

In order to adequately respond to the above mandate, TPOs must place an emphasis on securing public participation. This includes developing an extensive public outreach program which will bring in segments of the community that may have previously been excluded from full participation in the transportation planning and decision-making process.

Additionally, Florida Statutes (F.S.) Chapter 339.175 sets forth the operating framework for each TPO. This chapter includes information such as voting membership, authority and responsibilities, committee appointments and the development of plans and programs involved in transportation planning. The Florida law also includes language indicating that certain mechanisms be put in place to ensure citizen participation and to allow for interested parties to review and provide comments on plans and programs prior to approval by the TPO Board.

Public access to government proceedings held in the State of Florida is addressed in F.S. Chapter 286, regarding "government in the sunshine." The so-called Sunshine Law requires that:

- Meetings of boards or commissions must be open to the public;
- Reasonable public notice of such meetings must be provided; and
- The minutes of the meetings shall be promptly recorded, and such records shall be open to public inspection.

Florida Statutes Section 286.0114 enacted in 2013 provides that members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a proposition before a board or commission. The River to Sea TPO provides time for public comment at all board and committee meetings.

Other policies have been established which reinforce the need for public participation such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. NEPA and subsequent Environmental Policy Statements (EPS) issued by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) constitute a framework of policies and procedures supporting the protection of the environment. In this case, the term “environment” includes the natural environment, the built environment, the cultural and social fabric of our country and our communities and the quality of life of the people who live here. With regards to systems planning and programming, the FHWA policy includes language that requires agencies at the federal level to:

- Encourage and help state transportation agencies, TPOs, and local governments to take a leadership role in identifying and considering social, economic and environmental concerns as early as possible in the development of transportation and land use plans and programs.
- Advocate broad-based public participation by these agencies to generate consensus on transportation and land use solutions and the purpose and need for transportation investments.

While each of these documents has a slightly different focus, it is quite clear that the intent for transportation planning professionals is to incorporate early and continuous public participation in the decision-making process.

In addition to the requirements mandated by federal and state government, the River to Sea TPO is a strong advocate for open and clear communication and involvement of the public. The River to Sea TPO recognizes that:

- The “public” refers to citizens, special interest groups, advocates, political action groups, businesses and other entities that may have an interest in or be impacted by transportation issues;
- Engaging the public in meaningful ways leads to transportation decisions that fully consider the needs and desires of the community;
- Regular dialogue with the public fosters relationships and creates a welcome environment for persons to express their thoughts and opinions;
- Public involvement planning provides a means to inform and educate as well as to receive input on transportation issues that impact our community; and
- Public involvement is not meant to be only a specific and separate activity, but rather should be integrated into many of the daily activities of the organization.

TPO BOARD, COMMITTEES AND STAFF

As required under state and federal law, the River to Sea TPO has organized a formal committee structure to carry out the required activities of the transportation planning process. All meetings of the River to Sea TPO Board, its advisory committees and subcommittees are conducted in accordance with the procedures and policies that apply to “government in the sunshine.” The

meetings are held at regularly scheduled times and dates and at facilities that are fully accessible to all interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend and are encouraged to provide comments regarding transportation issues.

River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (R2CTPO) Board

The River to Sea TPO Board membership consists of locally elected officials representing various municipal and county governments. These officials are elected to office by the public and are expected to act on behalf of their respective constituency. In this regard, they contribute to public participation in the TPO process by representing the needs and desires of the citizens in their jurisdictions and by promoting transportation plans and programs in the community. TPO Board members also represent the public interests by appointing members to serve on the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) and on the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).

As provided by Florida Statutes, there are 19 voting members on the TPO Board. Additionally, there are six non-voting members on the board. These members represent the TCC, CAC, BPAC, FDOT District 5 (non-voting advisor) and the Volusia and Flagler County school boards. The TPO Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month and all meetings are properly noticed and open to the public. In accordance with the adopted bylaws of the TPO, each meeting agenda includes an opportunity for "citizens to comment or be heard on any matter pertinent to the urban transportation planning process." This provides time for citizens to address the board regarding a broad range of transportation related topics.

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) is a committee of planning professionals who act in an advisory capacity on all technical matters relating to transportation. The members are appointed by their respective governments. The membership of the TCC consists of technically qualified representatives including planners, engineers, and representatives from aviation authorities, port authorities, public transit agencies, the school board and the emergency operations center. In addition to technical review, the TCC members are able to provide insight regarding the public participation efforts and public sentiment from each of their respective jurisdictions.

The TCC meets on the third Tuesday of each month and forwards all comments and recommendations to the TPO Board. All TCC meetings are properly noticed and are open to the public. In accordance with the adopted bylaws, the TCC "shall provide an opportunity at each of its meetings for citizens to comment or be heard on any matter pertinent to the transportation planning and programming process." The bylaws also state that the TCC "shall, when feasible and desirable to do so, utilize any means that may be suggested or devised to provide for citizen participation in the transportation planning process."

Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)

The Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) is a committee appointed by the TPO Board members to provide citizen input to the transportation planning process. CAC members are appointed by each board member and, according to F.S. Chapter 339.175, they "serve at the pleasure" of the TPO Board.

The CAC meets on the third Tuesday of each month and forwards all comments and recommendations to the TPO Board. All CAC meetings are properly noticed and are open to the public. In accordance with the adopted bylaws of the CAC, each CAC meeting agenda includes an opportunity for press and citizen comments. This provides time for citizens to address the CAC regarding an unlimited range of transportation related topics. With respect to public participation, the CAC Bylaws indicate that members are responsible to accomplish the following:

- Conduct public information programs;
- Provide an effective citizens review;
- Determine the effect of a plan or project, as proposed, upon the various segments of the population;
- Note the plans or projects that may be harmful or detrimental to segments of the population; and
- Hold public meetings to solicit public reaction and to determine the degree of acceptance that a plan or proposal may have by all segments of the public.

The CAC has been, and will continue to be, the primary forum for citizen discussion on all transportation-related topics. Efforts are made to assemble a Citizens' Advisory Committee whose membership adequately represents the social and demographic diversity of Volusia County, Flagler County and the cities of Flagler Beach, Beverly Beach, Palm Coast and Bunnell in Flagler County.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

In January 2005, the TPO formed a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to provide input to the TPO Board on bicycle and pedestrian related transportation issues. The committee also works to ensure that planning for bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation are included in the overall transportation planning process.

The BPAC meets on the second Wednesday of each month and forwards all comments and recommendations to the TPO Board. All BPAC meetings are properly noticed and are open to the public. Each BPAC meeting agenda includes an opportunity for press and citizen comments. This provides time for citizens to address the BPAC regarding an unlimited range of transportation related topics.

Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB)

The Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) is comprised of various community groups as outlined in Florida Statutes to represent persons with transportation disadvantages. Committee representatives are recommended by specific agencies and approved by the TPO Board. The purpose of the TDLCB is to assist the TPO in identifying local service needs and to provide information, advice, and direction to the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) regarding the coordination of services to be provided to the transportation disadvantaged. As such, the TDLCB provides a forum for the needs of the transportation disadvantaged to be heard.

The TDLCB meets on the second Wednesday of every other month at Votran and forwards all comments and recommendations to the TPO Board. All TDLCB meetings are properly noticed and are open to the public. In addition, each meeting agenda includes an opportunity for press

and citizen comments. This provides time for citizens to address the TDLCB regarding an unlimited range of transportation disadvantaged related topics.

Specialized Committees, Subcommittees and Working Groups

On many occasions, the TPO identifies the need to organize a subcommittee, working group or task force to address specific issues outside of the regular committee structure. These groups typically have a short-term mission, but may be extended indefinitely should it be deemed necessary. As with all other committees, efforts are made to include varied and diverse representation on these special subcommittees. Membership may include citizen representatives, business interests or other groups that may be able to provide valuable input regarding a specific concern. Examples of the specialized subcommittees that have been established include, but are not limited to:

- Long Range Transportation Plan Subcommittee
- Transportation Improvement Plan Subcommittee
- Grievance Committee
- Unified Planning Work Program Subcommittee
- Mobility Working Group

All subcommittee meetings are open to the public, are held in a fully accessible location and allow time for public comment. Working groups are sometimes formed to tackle technical issues, educate members about an issue or share information. These meetings generally do not lead to or support policy decisions and do not fall under the requirements of public notice. In all cases, however, the meetings remain open to all interested participants.

TPO Staff and the Public Involvement Coordinator

The Executive Director of the TPO participates in and assigns the public participation and outreach activities of the TPO. With this approach, all staff members play a part in determining the level and effectiveness of public participation present in TPO planning activities. The staff is responsible for developing the materials necessary for disseminating information and documenting all public input, as well as participating in events that help to promote the activities of the TPO. Additional staff responsibilities include:

- Providing support to TPO Board and committee meetings by developing thorough meeting agendas, providing support materials and handouts in advance when possible, ensuring timely public notice, recording all open meetings and developing meeting minutes;
- Ensuring adequate public participation strategies are included in the scope of services for specific projects that govern work performed by consulting firms;
- Notifying the press by issuing press releases promoting upcoming community events, “kick-off” meetings or major activities of interest;
- Participating in outreach events and playing active role in local area organizations;
- Maintaining involvement in safety programs and educational events through active participation in the Safe Kids Volusia/Flagler and the Volusia County community-wide traffic safety teams;
- Participation in various professional and community organizations and events such as FPZA, VCard and Chambers of Commerce; and
- Maintaining a contact log to document telephone, email and in-person inquiries.

The Executive Director of the River to Sea TPO has assigned the responsibility of **coordinating** the overall public participation efforts of the TPO to a single staff member. The primary responsibility includes coordinating the two-way flow of information between the TPO and the public. The coordinator must also develop methods to ensure there is adequate documentation and evaluation of public participation methods employed by the organization. More specifically, the coordinator will:

- Develop and review guiding documents such as the TPO Public Participation Plan and work with staff to develop project specific outreach efforts that may be required;
- Establish and maintain a process to document the public participation activities of the TPO staff and monitor staff adherence;
- Monitor the effectiveness of public participation techniques and recommend changes when appropriate;
- Oversee the maintenance of a “scrapbook” of activities to document public participation efforts including press releases, advertising flyers and brochures, event summaries, photographs, etc.;
- Provide guidance and support to the TPO Board, committees and staff regarding public participation strategies and tools;
- Ensure press releases, public service announcements and notices are issued in accordance with this plan;
- Develop relationships with other organizations (news media, community groups, local governments, economic development agencies, etc.) in order to establish an open dialogue regarding transportation issues;
- Explore opportunities to participate in local events and coordinate staff participation and promote participation among staff and the CAC;
- Work with TPO staff to obtain promotional materials and visual displays for use at community events and workshops;
- Ensure the development of printed materials used for informing the citizenry and assist staff in the development of surveys, press releases and other materials designed to solicit public response; and
- Ensure the development and maintenance of supporting documents, plans and activities including the TPO website, Facebook page, Limited English Proficiency Access Plan and the Title VI Implementation program.

TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

Metropolitan Planning Organizations are required to develop plans and programs that consider all modes of transportation that are continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) as mandated by the Federal Highway Act of 1962. The plans and programs listed below comprise activities that the TPO has deemed to be of significant public interest. As such, it is the intent of the TPO that the public is provided with ample opportunity to participate in the formulation and review of these plans and programs.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The Long Range Transportation Plan is a twenty-five year plan that forecasts future transportation needs and estimates potential transportation revenues. It is developed as a broad guideline for local transportation decision-making and includes all major transportation projects funded with state and federal funds. The LRTP considers local, state, and federal transportation policies in light of a changing economic environment. The plan is updated periodically (every three to five years) to reflect urban growth and development, and to ensure proper representation of community values and transportation needs. Input from local government staff and citizens is critical in the development of this plan. Due to the comprehensive nature of this activity, a project specific public participation plan is developed for the major updates.

The traditional planning process used by the TPO in the past had been limited primarily to using the technical and citizen committees to develop alternative transportation scenarios to be analyzed. A greater emphasis was placed on engaging the public during development of the 2025 LRTP utilizing an interactive planning activity called “Strings and Ribbons” in which citizen participants work together to develop a plan for expending federal, state, and local funds for transportation projects over a 20-year period.

The Strings and Ribbons game proved to be a very successful public participation tool that was interesting and educational for citizens and yielded results to show the TPO the transportation improvements desired by the public. The game provided for immediate hands-on participation and participants were required to work together to develop a plan for the transportation planning area. Thirty-four (34) game sessions were held over a 14-month timeframe with over 670 citizens spending more than 1,000 hours actively discussing needed improvement projects and developed over 100 future transportation maps.

As part of the 2035 LRTP, the TPO continued placing an emphasis on public involvement by creating a strategy that utilized four primary activities. These included: 1) creating a project website; 2) conducting a series of interactive planning sessions and public meetings; 3) conducting surveys both in print and on-line; and 4) utilizing the TPO advisory committees. The TPO dedicated its existing staff resources to conduct the public involvement activities scheduled throughout the development of the plan. This ensured that all activities involved personnel knowledgeable in the planning process and that the efforts were completed in a very cost effective manner.

The TPO completed 13 Make Your Mark in 2035 planning sessions during the development of the 2035 LRTP, involving just over 200 citizens. The TPO logged 933 responses between the two surveys distributed and the project website registered 8,471 hits during the plan development. The Long Range Transportation Plan was listed on the agendas of 80 TPO advisory committee and board meetings and four public meetings were held to review the draft plan just prior to adoption. A formal public hearing was held during the TPO Board meeting to seek final comments on the 2035 LRTP.

This type of well-rounded program involves the public in ways that are meaningful and measurable. They provide a means to inform, educate, and involve citizens in the transportation decision-making processes that impact their daily lives. The open and accessible formats and quality of the information collected ensures that the plans and programs developed reflect community values and benefit all segments of the population equally.

In 2014, the River to Sea TPO will begin the process of developing its 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. A well-rounded public involvement strategy will be developed to ensure the plan is created with substantial public outreach. The process is expected to be completed in September 2015.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) serves as the principal budgetary document for the TPO. As such, the UPWP lays out the planning tasks to be undertaken by the TPO during the next two fiscal years and, in some cases, tracks the continuation of projects initiated and carried over from previous years. The UPWP also contains the associated costs and agency involvement required for successfully completing each task.

The UPWP is developed with ample opportunity for citizen review and comment. The TCC, CAC and BPAC members are appointed to the UPWP Subcommittee, which develops the base list of tasks for the draft document. The timing for developing the UPWP is coordinated with the annual TPO Board retreat so that board members are informed of projects being considered and have an opportunity to provide direction regarding the tasks being recommended. Once a draft of the UPWP is developed, it is made available to the public for review and comment throughout a formal review period and during the regular meetings of the TCC, CAC and BPAC. At a minimum, the draft UPWP will be presented at standing committee meetings and to the TPO Board for review one month prior to adoption.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Priority Process

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) implements projects from the Long Range Transportation Plan over a five-year planning horizon. The TIP includes highway projects as well as aviation, bicycle and pedestrian and transit projects. In addition, for informational purposes, the River to Sea TPO's TIP traditionally includes local projects and projects that are considered to be regionally significant.

On an annual basis, the TIP is updated to remove those projects that have been completed and to add new projects or new phases of existing projects to the outer year as funding becomes

available. In preparing the TIP, the TPO is responsible for including both state and federally funded transportation system improvements contained within the TPO urbanized planning area. These responsibilities are consistent with those outlined in Florida Statute 339.175. Additionally, the TPO makes an annual request to all city and county governments within the metropolitan planning area for their list of projects to be included in the local section of the TIP.

The priority process and “Call for Projects” is used by the River to Sea TPO annually to evaluate project applications that may be added during the subsequent year's TIP update. The prioritization process is established through the development of standard evaluation criteria used to measure a projects level of importance relative to other projects in a given category. Each year, the process starts with the development of a schedule that outlines the key activities and timeframes of this effort.

TCC, CAC and BPAC members serve on a TIP Subcommittee, which develops the evaluation criteria and the subsequent project rankings that result from applying the measures. The applications and evaluation criteria, Priority Project lists and the TIP are reviewed and approved by the TCC, CAC, BPAC and the TPO Board and the process affords ample opportunity for citizen input and review. All meetings of these committees, as well as the TIP Subcommittee, are noticed and drafts of both documents are available to the public for review and comment throughout a formal review period and during the regular meetings of the TCC, CAC and BPAC. A public hearing is held prior to adoption of the TIP and Priority Project lists during the regularly scheduled TPO Board meeting.

The TIP can also be accessed on the Internet using an interactive mapping system on our website (www.r2ctpo.org). The interactive TIP has been designed to provide this critical information in a flexible format that allows anyone to generate either the entire TIP document or a smaller custom designed document covering only those projects that are of particular interest. Using the three search options (maps, custom reports, and the TIP search) visitors to this website can locate and learn about projects by road name, by state road designation, by state program number, by political jurisdiction, transportation system, or by geographic location. The interactive TIP was introduced by the River to Sea TPO and is now used by MPOs/TPOs throughout the state as a user-friendly means to provide information to the public.

The traditional print version of the TIP document is also made available on the TPO website and distributed to local area public libraries.

The public participation process used for the development of the TIP is also used to satisfy Votran's Program of Projects (POP) as required by the Federal Transit Administration. The POP is a list of transit related activities developed each year to indicate funding expenditures on items including vehicle purchases, facility construction and renovation, major equipment upgrades, etc.

Transit Development Plan (TDP) and Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)

The Transit Development Plan (TDP) provides a framework to guide the evolution of transit services throughout the respective transit service areas (Flagler and Volusia). It includes an

assessment of transit needs in the local area, identifies local transit policies, evaluates existing services and proposed service improvements, determines capital and operating costs of the proposed services as well as the existing and proposed sources of funding and outlines a staged implementation plan.

The Volusia TDP is a policy document that integrates transit goals and objectives with those of other adopted plans, including the LRTP, the Volusia County Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP). Transit agencies are required to submit a TDP in order to receive State Block Grant funding from FDOT. Current requirements include updating the TDP every five years with a planning horizon of ten years. Minor updates and a report of program status must be submitted each year.

The TDSP plays a significant factor in the delivery of coordinated transportation disadvantaged services. For Volusia County, the TDSP is developed by the Community Transportation Coordinator (Votran) and its designated official planning agency (TPO); likewise for Flagler County, the TDSP is developed by their Community Transportation Coordinator (Flagler County) and its designated official planning agency the Northeast Florida Regional Council under the guidance and approval of their respective Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB). The TDSP is required by the State Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD). Updates to the plan must be submitted annually, with a major update required every five years.

Volusia County's TDP and the TDSP are developed with ample opportunity for citizen review and comment. Due to the comprehensive nature of these documents, a project specific public participation plan is developed for the major update of the TDP and the Development Plan component of the TDSP is required to identify the local public participation process that is used during the development of the major updates. Public outreach typically includes a kick-off meeting as well as presentations to the TPO Board and committees at the start of the project and at various points throughout the development of the plans. The TPO, TCC, CAC, BPAC and TDLCB members are able to review and comment during regularly scheduled subcommittee meetings and comments from the general public are solicited during public meetings. The TD Commission specifically requires that the TDSP be presented for review and comment to the TDLCB which provides local approval. To further enhance public participation, surveys are conducted on board all fixed-route vehicles, mailed to Votran Gold riders and given to bus operators to gain their suggestions and recommendations to the public transportation services in Volusia County. Stakeholder interviews are also performed.

Through its involvement in the review and approval of the plan, the TDLCB is able to guide and support Votran in implementing coordination efforts and locally developed service standards that are consistent with the needs and resources of the community.

Although the TDP is developed through the TPO structure (TCC, CAC, BPAC and TDLCB), approval is provided by the Volusia County Council. A public hearing is held prior to adoption of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) by the Volusia County Council. The TDSP is reviewed and

approved by the TDLCB and then forwarded to the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Congestion Management Process (CMP)

Congestion management describes a systematic procedure for identifying locations in the transportation system that are inefficient and then looks to develop and implement solutions to alleviate the “bottlenecks” and improve system performance. The River to Sea TPO Congestion Management Process (CMP) provides transportation policy makers with a guide to judge the relative merits of transportation projects against each other.

Public participation in the formulation of the transportation policies included in the CMP is encouraged by the TPO. Congestion Management was included in the 2035 LRTP as part of the project evaluation and screening chapter. In 2014/15, the TPO will revisit the CMP as part of the support activities for the 2040 LRTP and the public participation efforts will be outlined as part of a specific plan developed for this activity. A portion of the public involvement will be accomplished through the work of a subcommittee comprised of TCC, CAC and BPAC representatives. Notices are provided to the press for all meetings of the CMP Subcommittee and a public review period will be scheduled for the draft report.

TPO Public Participation Plan

The River to Sea TPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) has been developed as a way to initiate proactive efforts for providing complete information, timely public notice and full access to key decision-making. The process supports the early and continuing participation of the public in all aspects of the TPO planning activities. The TPO Public Participation Plan incorporates federal and state requirements for public participation into a single document that defines the goals, strategies, activities and measures of effectiveness for encouraging public participation in the planning process.

The plan is developed within the formal committee structure and is adopted by the River to Sea TPO Board. The PPP is reviewed and assessed every two years to ensure that effective strategies are identified and unsuccessful efforts are removed from the process. Updates or revisions to the plan require a minimum public comment period of 45 days.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan

The Bicycle and Pedestrian planning program was initiated in October 1989 through a Joint Participation Agreement with the state. Since that time, the TPO has continued to allocate planning funds to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Program to help ensure that bicycles and pedestrians are considered in the overall transportation planning process. The TPO first adopted a Bicycle Comprehensive Plan in August 1991 and a Pedestrian Comprehensive Plan in May 1993.

On January 25, 2005, the TPO Board adopted an updated and combined Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan. The plan was developed through the BPAC with input from local jurisdictions. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan can be viewed and downloaded at no charge from the TPO’s website at www.r2ctpo.org.

Title VI Program

The River to Sea TPO Title VI Program resulted from a recommendation by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). A Title VI program is intended to establish and implement procedures that comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) as well as other related federal and state statutes and regulations.

The TPO adopted its first Title VI Implementation & Accomplishment Plan on January 24, 2006, with a requirement to review the program annually. Title VI Complaint Procedures, in English and Spanish are included in the plan and are posted on the River to Sea TPO website. These procedures were modified and adopted by the TPO Board in February 2012.

The Title VI Program is developed with ample opportunity for citizen review and comment. The CAC, TCC, BPAC and TDLCB members were provided the opportunity to review and comment on the program. In addition, the drafts of the Title VI Program were made available to the public for review and comment throughout a review period and during the regular meetings of the TCC, CAC, BPAC, TDLCB and TPO Board. Copies of the program can be viewed and downloaded at no charge from the TPO's website at www.r2ctpo.org.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating against or otherwise excluding individuals on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any of their activities. It has been recognized that one form of discrimination occurs through an inability to communicate due to a limited proficiency in the English language. This limitation is often the result of an individual's national origin. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and various directives from the US Department of Justice (DOJ) and US Department of Transportation (DOT) require federal aid recipients to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs, services and activities by those who do not speak English well.

The goal of the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (R2C TPO) Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Access Plan is to ensure that the River to Sea TPO recognizes the needs of limited English proficient (LEP) members of the community and implements a plan to communicate effectively and ensure reasonable access to our processes, information and decision-making. The River to Sea TPO has identified the following documents for translation into Spanish language format: Walk and Ride Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Video; 2035 Long Range Transportation Survey; and providing Spanish, as well as other language formats, on the TPO website. In addition, the River to Sea TPO has participated in the annual Univision Telefutura Health Fair, a primarily Spanish-speaking event.

Miscellaneous Planning Studies

Public participation is an integral part of one-time activities such as corridor studies as well as regularly repeated activities such as the annual Transportation Improvement Program process and the Long Range Transportation Plan updates. In many cases, specific transportation studies will utilize the TPO advisory committee structure to receive input. The nature of some studies, however, requires additional activities to ensure adequate public input is received. Typically, the

project scope will outline the activities that will be undertaken and may include the development of a project website, arranging stakeholder meetings or involving special interest groups.

ONGOING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES

Public participation is an ongoing activity of the River to Sea TPO, with several strategies and techniques continuously occurring. This section contains descriptions of public participation tools currently being used by the TPO. As noted earlier, the River to Sea TPO will continue to develop and utilize innovative public participation tools and processes to obtain and solicit public participation and input in the TPO transportation planning process.

Public participation strategies and techniques include, but are not limited to, the following:

Internet Based Activities

River to Sea TPO Website

The River to Sea TPO utilizes an organizational website to increase public awareness of the activities and purpose of the TPO. The website includes information about the TPO process, the board and committees, upcoming meeting agendas, planning studies, documents and other topics pertaining to the transportation environment. The website address is www.r2ctpo.org.

The website is maintained and updated by a member of the TPO staff and is used to promote regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications and work products to local governments, member partners and the public.

Activities: Post all draft documents for public review as well as approved documents once completed; maintain a calendar of activities including TPO Board and committee meeting dates and times; provide links to organizations and activities with similar goals as the TPO; provide contact information and ensure accessibility as required by ADA, Title VI and the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan.

Social Media

An increasing number of people and organizations are using social media sites for information and to stay current with the activities of friends, family, colleagues and organizations. Recognizing this, the River to Sea TPO introduced a Facebook site for the organization in 2011. The site is located at www.facebook.com/RivertoSeaTPO.

The Facebook page offers the TPO another tool to post current activities and engage interested members of the community. Activity on this site must conform to public record and public access laws in Florida (i.e. Government in the Sunshine) and requires a thoughtful approach. TPO Board and committee members are prohibited from engaging in an exchange or discussion of matters via social media that will foreseeably come before the board or committee for official action. Additionally, the site may not have restricted access and must apply rules for archiving information. As additional guidance is provided at the state level, the organization will modify the application of social media tools when necessary.

Activities: Post current meeting information, links and other items of interest.

TPO Master Database and Email Contact List

The distribution of information in a timely manner is important to ensure participation by interested parties. The River to Sea TPO utilizes two methods for disseminating information; the TPO master database and the TPO email contact list. The TPO master database includes demographic information for committee membership and groups as well as individuals that have expressed an interest in the transportation planning activities of the TPO. Other contacts include local and regional government agencies, churches, schools, libraries, homeowner associations, etc. The TPO email contact list contains email information for committee members, local and regional government agencies, consultants, churches, schools, libraries, homeowner associations and citizens that have expressed an interest in the activities of the TPO.

Both of the lists enable TPO staff to disseminate information on upcoming meetings, workshops, new publications, significant policy decisions and/or any other topics of interest. The master database contains more than 1650 entries and the email contact list over 1,000 entries. Both lists are regularly reviewed for accuracy and completeness. Potential contacts will continue to be identified and added to the TPO's master database and email contact list and will be used to enhance other public participation activities.

Activities: Utilize the list for providing broad notification of TPO activities.

Notification of Meetings, Workshops and Special Events

Florida Administrative Code requires advertisement of any public meeting where a decision could be made or that may be attended by more than one elected official. Prior to all TPO Board, TCC, CAC, BPAC and TDLCB meetings, meeting agendas/notices are provided to several local newspapers, television and radio stations throughout the Central Florida area. The list includes (but is not limited to) *the Daytona Beach News-Journal*, *Daytona Times*, *Deltona-DeLand Beacon*, *The Hometown News*, *The Orlando Sentinel (Volusia/Flagler/Palm Coast Sections)*, *WBCC Radio*, *WESH-TV*, *WNDB Radio* and *WROD Radio*.

Additionally, notices of subcommittee meetings, public hearings, workshops and special events are distributed to the media agencies contained in the TPO's master database and email contact list.

Activities: Notification of all monthly meetings, special meetings and workshops.

Public Meetings and Hearings

These are public meetings used to solicit public comment on a project or issue being considered for adoption by the TPO. Hearings provide a formal setting for citizens to provide comments to the TPO or another decision-making body. The meetings are recorded. Written comment forms are provided at all regular meetings of the TPO Board for those citizens who are uncomfortable or unable to express their thoughts verbally. In addition, forms are also provided for citizens who

wish to address the TPO Board regarding an item on the agenda. Examples of both the written comment form and “request for public comment on agenda items” form are included in Appendix B. Written responses to public input are provided when appropriate.

Activities: Utilize the contact list to issue notification of public hearings and special meetings; develop agendas that clearly identify items requiring a public hearing. Provide forms for public input and information necessary to ensure reasonable accessibility.

Comment Forms

Comment forms are often used to solicit public comment on specific issues being presented at a workshop or other public meeting(s). Comment forms can be very general in nature, or can ask for very specific feedback. The comment forms also provide an opportunity for those individuals who are not comfortable speaking at a meeting or workshop to voice their comments in writing instead of verbally.

Activities: Comment forms are available at all meetings of the TPO Board and committee meetings, public hearings, workshops, etc.

TPO Logo

A logo representing the TPO is used to identify products and publications of the TPO. A logo helps the public become familiar with the different activities of the TPO by providing a means of recognizing TPO products. In the summer of 2009, the Volusia TPO changed its name from the Volusia County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to the Volusia Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). In 2014, the Volusia TPO expanded its planning area due to the 2010 Census and changed its name again, this time to the River to Sea TPO. The organization adopted a new logo as shown below.



Activities: A logo should be used on all TPO publications including those developed by consultants working on TPO sponsored projects. The logo should also be included on promotional items (if space allows).

News Articles, Press Releases and Public Service Announcements

News articles explaining plans, programs, studies and events have the capacity to reach an audience that is much larger than what the TPO can reach independently. Given this, media relations are a powerful component for any organization’s public participation efforts. The River to Sea TPO maintains an open dialogue with the press and encourages articles that help to inform and involve the public. The TPO maintains (at a minimum) a history of all relevant news articles published during the preceding year.

Formal press releases and public service announcements are sent to local media (newspaper, television and radio) to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by the TPO and its committees.

Activities: Ongoing dialogue with the press, a scrapbook of media coverage, timely notification to the public of corridor or other planning studies, workshops, open houses, public hearings, awards, special activities and events.

Printed Materials & Promotional Items

The River to Sea TPO has developed a series of brochures and informational items to provide information to the public about transportation issues and the TPO. The TPO will continue to identify the need for informational brochures and develop items that provide value to the community. The following items are currently utilized:

- *The Layman's Guide to the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization* – This was developed as a simple, straightforward way to explain the activities of the TPO. The tri-fold brochure mixes non-technical terminology with light humor to inform citizens about the role of the TPO in shaping the transportation system. The guide encourages the public to participate in the planning process and provides information on how and why they should get involved. This brochure was updated in 2014.
- 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Summary – This summary brochure provides a description of the long-range planning process of the River to Sea TPO. The summary includes the TPO membership, goals of the plan, financial forecasts and the list of transportation projects considered to be cost-feasible in the 20-year planning horizon. The summary was produced in 2011 and included an update in 2012, 2013 and 2014.
- *Volusia County Bicycling Map for Experienced Bicyclists* – This map is produced to inform experienced bicyclists of routes throughout the Volusia County area. This map was updated in 2012 and 2014.
- Promotional Items – the TPO staff also recognizes the potential of increasing the TPO's presence in the community by distributing items such as pens with the TPO logo, stickers with transportation safety messages, refrigerator magnets, rulers and such. When considering promotional materials, TPO staff members attempt to identify the best value in terms of product delivery, longevity, quality and cost.

Activities: Develop and distribute other printed brochures, reports, promotional items, etc. in order to keep the public informed and to raise awareness of the TPO in the community; ensure printed documents are also available via the internet on the TPO's website. Staff also participates in many community-based organizations to build the organizations relationships; FPZA, V-CARD, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, ISB Coalition, etc.

Project Workshops, Community Presentations and Special Events

In addition to formal committee meetings and public hearings, the River to Sea TPO provides workshops and presentations throughout the planning area to help inform the public about

significant activities. Comment forms, organizational literature, contact information and other information are typically provided so that participants can provide information and input during the event or as a follow-up. TPO staff presents at various events to promote the organization. Some presentations have included the Minority Institute of Higher Learning (MIHE), League of Women Voters, ASHE, V-CARD Flagler Forum, etc.

The TPO uses its master database and email contact list to notify potential participants, posts advertisements or flyers in public places, press releases may be issued and event information may be posted on the TPO website. Workshops and presentations occur in various geographic locations depending on the activity, target group, project or invitation.

TPO staff members also participate in many community-related events that introduce citizens to the TPO and help build strong community relationships. By supporting pedestrian safety events, bicycle education programs and many other activities, the TPO furthers its public participation efforts by forging new relationships and making itself more visible in the community.

Activities: Continuous efforts to involve the public in the TPO planning process and to raise awareness in TPO planning activities through public inquiries, events or other activities.

SOCIO-CULTURAL EFFECTS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Although transportation system projects are undertaken in an attempt to improve conditions in and around a community, sometimes there are unintended negative impacts associated with the completion of a project. Socio-cultural effects (SCE) is a process that has been developed to evaluate the effects of a transportation action on a community and its quality of life. Public participation is an essential tool for completing the assessment process. Public participation activities help to identify the groups that may be affected by a transportation project and to document any impacts those groups perceive as significant. The involved parties can then provide insight into workable alternatives and mitigation options.

The River to Sea TPO has a strong commitment to increasing the public participation activities used in support of future SCE efforts. This assessment occurs during the inception of projects as part of the Environmental Justice evaluation and Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) and as part of the long-range planning efforts.

COORDINATED ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In addition to the public participation plan and processes outlined in this document, there are opportunities for public participation and review in the decision-making process through the activities of other transportation agencies in the Volusia County and Flagler County planning area. The River to Sea TPO has worked closely with the following agencies in the past to share information and will continue to coordinate activities in the future. The organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Votran
- East Central Florida Regional Planning Council

- Central Florida MPO Alliance
- Florida Department of Transportation
- County and Municipal Governments

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

Due to the requirements for increased public participation coordination and documentation, previously established public participation procedures must be expanded to ensure that the public is a key player in the planning and decision-making process.

TPO Policy Statement Regarding Public Participation

The following statement will constitute the general guide for activities of the TPO Board and staff in implementing a public participation program under federal and state mandates:

It shall be the policy of the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization that all segments of the population of Volusia County, portions of Flagler County and the cities of Flagler Beach, Beverly Beach, Palm Coast and Bunnell in Flagler County will have reasonable access to the technical and policy processes that support the development of the transportation plans, programs and policies of the TPO. To this end, the TPO will endeavor to educate, inform and directly involve the public in the decision-making activities during all phases of the planning process. Furthermore, the TPO will make a concerted effort to educate, inform and include the traditionally underserved segments of the population.

Public Participation Goal, Objectives and Policies

Goal: To provide the public with thorough information on transportation planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner

Objective 1: The River to Sea TPO shall actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to the policies contained in this Public Participation Plan in accordance with state and federal law.

Policy 1.1: The TPO shall maintain an up-to-date database of contacts including, at a minimum, the following persons:

- Elected Officials
- Local Government Staff
- Legislative Delegates for Volusia and Flagler Counties
- TPO Committee Members
- Transportation Agencies (ports, airports, transit, etc.)
- Local Media
- Homeowner's Associations
- Civic Groups
- Special Interest Groups

- j. Volusia County/Flagler County Libraries (for public notification)
- k. Individuals expressing an interest in transportation planning activities

Policy 1.2: The TPO shall, when feasible, mail meeting announcements and invitations to the TPO community contact list or to targeted groups for upcoming activities.

Objective 2: The TPO shall keep the public informed of ongoing transportation related activities on a continuous basis.

Policy 2.1: The TPO shall make all publications and work products available to the public via the Internet and at the TPO office.

Policy 2.2: TPO staff shall be available to provide general and project-specific information at a central location during normal business hours and after hours at the request of groups, such as homeowner's associations, with reasonable notice.

Policy 2.3: The TPO shall conduct a survey every second year to gauge public sentiment and trends.

Policy 2.4: The TPO shall consistently review and assess documents, plans, studies and other items to determine the need for translation into Spanish for limited English proficiency (LEP) populations.

Policy 2.5: The TPO shall maintain an Internet website and Facebook page.

Policy 2.5.1: The website shall be updated and maintained to provide the most current information available.

Policy 2.5.2: The website shall, at a minimum, contain the following information:

- a. Contact information (mailing address, phone, fax and e-mail)
- b. Current TPO and advisory committee membership
- c. Meeting calendars, agendas, and adopted minutes
- d. Brief descriptions of current projects
- e. Work products and publications (Transportation Improvement Program, Long Range Transportation Plan, Unified Planning Work Program, etc.)
- f. Links to related agencies (Florida Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council, Votran, Federal Highway Administration, etc.)

Objective 3: The TPO shall encourage the participation of all citizens throughout its metropolitan planning area including Volusia County, portions of Flagler County and in the cities of Flagler Beach, Beverly Beach, Palm Coast and Bunnell in Flagler County in the transportation planning process.

Policy 3.1: Target audiences shall be identified for each planning study conducted by the TPO, including residents, business and property owners and those traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations, including but not limited to, low income and minority households, within the study area.

Policy 3.2: The TPO shall, whenever feasible, hold public meetings, workshops and hearings at a site and time convenient to potentially affected citizens.

Objective 4: The TPO shall strive to continuously improve public participation.

Policy 4.1: The TPO shall continuously evaluate public participation techniques, according to the procedures contained in the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization's Public Participation Plan.

Policy 4.2: The Public Participation Plan shall be reviewed and adopted, with revisions if necessary, every two (2) years.

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) require the TPO to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of public participation activities. By continuously evaluating these activities, it is possible to identify ineffective programs and subsequently discontinue those efforts. In addition, it is possible to identify successful or low cost strategies that should be utilized in the future. The TPO recognizes the importance of these measures as a way to ensure that the public participation process is working well and providing meaningful results.

The following measures of effectiveness provide a standard framework with which to measure the public participation techniques utilized by the River to Sea TPO.

Public Participation Evaluation Matrix

TPO Board, Committees and Staff				
Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal	Performance Strategies	Review Period
<i>Scheduled Meetings</i>	Monitor meeting attendance of members and alternates	Strive for 100% participation by appointed committee members	Include minimum standards for meeting attendance in the TPO Bylaws and report attendance records to the Board	Monthly
	Monitor demographic representation of appointed committee members	When possible, fill available positions with citizens that represent varied demographic populations	Identify open positions and assist board members in recruiting public participants when requested	Monthly
	Document press and citizen attendance and comments at regularly scheduled meetings	Ensure an opportunity for public comment at all meetings & record the attendance & participation of nonmembers	Encourage attendance and participation of interested parties through public notices, advertising, "networking" and posting meeting notices on the Internet	Monthly

Ongoing Public Participation Strategies				
Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal	Performance Strategies	Review Period
<i>Open Access to Plans and Documents</i>	Monitor the daily public review of plans and reports maintained within the TPO offices	Ensure ample opportunity for press and public review of all records	Promote/encourage review of TPO documents Post documents on website for convenient download Distribute print copies of key documents to libraries Produce documents that are accessible to persons with disabilities	Monthly
<i>Requests for Information</i>	Number of calls, e-mail, and other verbal and written inquiries	Respond to all requests by the general public	Use Public Involvement Contact Logs to document information provided and actions taken	Monthly
<i>TPO Master Database/Email Contact List</i>	Number of recipients on master contact listing	Maintain 1,400+ interested parties in the Master Database / Community Contact List	Identify interested parties during public events and workshops	Monthly
	Monitor returned mail	Ensure 100% accuracy for mailings	Review and correct mailing list on a regular basis	Weekly
<i>Community Workshops and Public Hearings</i>	Attendance	Expected attendance will vary - set goals for each event	Use advertising, public notice, flyers, invitations, website, Facebook and press releases Schedule at varying times and locations	As needed
	Feedback and Participation	Encourage participants to provide written or verbal input	Use surveys, comment sheets, interactive exercises, games, etc. to increase participation	As needed

Ongoing Public Participation Strategies (continued)				
Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal	Performance Strategies	Review Period
<i>Media/News Releases and Articles</i>	Number of news articles and level of press coverage	Strive for increased media coverage of TPO activities	Issue press releases and develop positive relationships with media representatives	Monthly
<i>Printed Materials and Marketing Items</i>	Layman's Guides Distributed	Distribute to new persons in the TPO Master Database / Contact List and at community events	Identify interested recipients during public events and workshops and through the SCE process	Annually
	2035 LRTP Summaries	Distribute to new persons in the TPO Master Database / Community Contact List and at community events	Identify interested recipients during public events and workshops and through the SCE process	Annually
<i>TPO Website & Facebook Site</i>	Number of site visitors	Maintain user-friendly website	Issue press releases and increase links from other sites.	Annually
<i>Project Specific Efforts</i>	Document public involvement activities for special projects	Ensure the performance of public involvement efforts meets the goals established for the project	As established for each project	As needed
<i>Public Inquiry, Special Events and Miscellaneous Activities</i>	Number of special events involving TPO staff	Attend community events as requested by the public and/or groups and organizations	Participate in various public events throughout the county where TPO activities can be discussed	As needed
	Number of public inquiries logged (calls, e-mail, website)	Respond to 100% of the public inquiries	None	As needed

SUMMARY

The River to Sea TPO recognizes the importance of the public participation process as a means to inform, educate, and involve citizens in the transportation decisions that impact our daily lives. By involving the public in the planning process early and often, transportation planners are better able to ensure that plans and programs are developed in a way that reflects our community values and benefits all segments of the population equally.

The TPO Public Participation Plan has been developed to help the TPO staff and committees administer an effective public participation program. Citizen input was provided through the CAC and a 45-day review period was established. Future updates to this manual will incorporate new and innovative strategies as they are developed.

DOCUMENT REVIEW AND ADVERTISING SCHEDULE

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

- Review and updated at least every 5 years
- Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's MPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- A new UPWP is adopted every other year
- Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Draft UPWP must be submitted to the reviewing agencies no later than March 15
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- By May 15, the TPO will address all comments and adopt the final UPWP
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's MPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- Reviewed and adopted annually
- Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's MPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Priority Project Lists

- Reviewed and adopted annually
- Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's TPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Transit Development Plan (TDP)

- Major updates are required every three years (Note: proposed changes may extend this period to every five years with a planning horizon of ten years)
- Minor updates must be submitted on an annual basis for the years between major updates
- A specialized public participation plan is developed for the major updates
- Public outreach typically includes a kick-off meeting
- Presentations to TPO Board and committees at the start of the project and at various points throughout the development of the plan
- The TPO, TCC, CAC, BPAC and TDLCB members are able to review and comment during regularly scheduled committee meetings and comments from the general public are solicited during public meetings
- Surveys are conducted on board all fixed-route vehicles, mailed to Votran Gold riders and provided to bus operators to gain their suggestions and recommendations to the public transportation services in Volusia County
- Stakeholder interviews are also performed
- A public hearing is held prior to adoption of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) by the Volusia County Council
- The TDP is developed through the TPO structure
 - Technical input is received from the TCC
 - Citizen input is received from the CAC, BPAC and TDLCB
- Approval of the TDP is provided by the Volusia County Council
- Post adopted document on both the TPO and CTC websites (www.r2ctpo.org) (www.votran.com)

Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)

- Major updates are required every five years
- Minor updates must be submitted on an annual basis for the years between major updates
- The TDSP is reviewed and approved by the TDLCB and then forwarded to the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

- This document is required by the State Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD)
- The Development Plan component identifies the local public participation process that is used during the development of the major updates
- Public outreach typically includes a kick-off meeting
 - Presentations to TPO Board and committees at the start of the project and at various points throughout the development of the plan
 - The TPO and TDLCB members are able to review and comment during regularly scheduled meetings and comments from the general public are solicited during these public meetings.
 - Drafts of the major update of the TDSP are posted on the CTC's website
 - Surveys are conducted on board all fixed-route vehicles, mailed to Votran Gold riders and provided to bus operators to gain their suggestions and recommendations to the public transportation services in Volusia County
 - Stakeholder interviews are also performed
 - A public hearing on the TDSP is not required
- Post adopted document on both the TPO and CTC websites (www.r2ctpo.org) (www.votran.com)

Congestion Management Process (CMP)

- Reviewed and adopted (periodically)
- Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's MPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Title VI Policy Statement and Discrimination Complaint Procedures:

- Reviewed and assessed annually to determine if revisions are needed
- Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's MPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Public Participation Plan:

- Review and assess every two (2) years
- Minimum 45-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's MPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan

- Reviewed and adopted (periodically)
- Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption and/or revision
- Review draft document through the standing committees and TPO Board
- Legal advertisement to be published in area newspapers and posted on TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)
- Review public comments, if applicable, and present draft document to standing committees for review and recommendation of approval to TPO Board
- The document is approved by the TPO Board
- Distribute final adopted copies to appropriate federal and state agencies as mandated in the State of Florida's MPO Program Management Handbook
- Post adopted document on the TPO website (www.r2ctpo.org)

Appendix A

Public Involvement Contact Log
Staff Member: _____

Date	Contact Information (name, agency, address, phone)	Type of Contact (phone, e-mail, in-person)	Topic Discussed	Follow Up Action (date, type of action taken, materials provided, etc.)

Appendix B

River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization Comment Card



(Date)

Name / Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Would you like to receive a copy of the meeting summary/minutes? Yes No

Would you like to learn more about the transportation planning process? Yes No

Please print your comments in the space provided below:

Please return to: River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)
2570 W. International Speedway Boulevard, Suite 100
Daytona Beach, FL 32114-8145
Phone: (386) 226-0422
Fax: (386) 226-0428

Request for Public Comment on Agenda



Dear Citizen:

Public participation is encouraged on matters on the agenda. If you desire to be recognized by the Chairman, please fill out this form and give it to a TPO staff member (**PRIOR** to the start of the meeting).

The Chairman will recognize people wishing to comment on **items which are not on the agenda** under the designated press/citizens comment period noted on the agenda.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Lois Bollenback, Executive Director
River to Sea TPO

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Contact Information _____

Agenda Item/Comments: (please use back of page if needed)
