

2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

*Draft Public Involvement Plan
River to Sea TPO*

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1 INTRODUCTION

The River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is a federally authorized planning agency created to oversee the local transportation system of the Palm Coast-Daytona Beach-Port Orange Urbanized Area.

For urbanized areas exceeding a population of 50,000, the existence of a Transportation/Metropolitan Planning Organization (TPO/MPO) is necessary to meet federal requirements for obtaining and expending federal transportation funds. Specifically, the federal government requires that each urbanized area, as a condition to the receipt of federal capital or operating assistance, have in place a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation (3-C) planning process. This 3-C process must result in plans and programs consistent with the comprehensively planned development of the urbanized area. In order to demonstrate that a 3-C planning process is being implemented, the River to Sea TPO must periodically prepare and adopt a 25-year long range transportation plan (per requirements of 23 CFR 450.306, 316 and 322).

During the development of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the River to Sea TPO is developing a public involvement strategy to fully engage the public to inform them of transportation issues facing the community and provide ample opportunity for input on the planning solutions being considered. The importance of public outreach as a means to inform, educate, and involve citizens in the transportation decision-making processes that impact their daily lives cannot be underestimated. The primary purpose of this LRTP Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to encourage early and continuous participation by the public in the development of the 2040 LRTP: by involving the public in ways that are meaningful and measurable, transportation planners are better able to ensure that the plans and programs developed reflect community values and benefit all segments of the population equally.

A successful outreach program includes efforts to reach and involve representatives from all walks of the community. The River to Sea TPO planning area includes a diverse population of almost 600,000 residents. With five institutions of higher education, there is an engaged and youthful population as well as a significant number of senior citizens and an active group of disabled advocates that seek to maintain independence for persons with disabilities. The TPO planning area covers rural communities and urbanized areas and includes an employment base consisting of agriculture, tourism and manufacturing.

Four primary activities are envisioned to meet the planning requirements outlined in Metropolitan Planning Rule (§450.316 and §450.322). These include: 1) creating a project website; 2) conducting a series of interactive planning sessions and meetings; 3) utilizing the results of meeting questionnaires and the independent *Tell the TPO* survey; and 4) utilizing the River to Sea TPO Advisory Committees. Each of these activities is described in greater detail in the following sections. In addition, the TPO will capitalize on other opportunities including press releases, direct mail lists, news media coverage and partner support to promote long range plan activities to the public.

2 ABOUT THE RIVER TO SEA TPO

The Volusia County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was formed in 1977 as the Volusia Coastal Area Transportation Study (VCATS). At that time, the organization served eastern Volusia County – mainly the cities around and including Daytona Beach. Since that initial creation, the organization has expanded to first include all of Volusia County and after the 2000 Census, expanded again to include Flagler Beach and Beverly Beach. Effective July 1, 2010, the Volusia County MPO changed its name to the Volusia TPO. On April 23, 2014, the Volusia TPO officially changed its name to the River to Sea TPO.

The 19-member River to Sea TPO Board consists of elected officials from all of the member local governments – county and city – and also has representation from the Volusia and Flagler County School Boards and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). These dedicated individuals are responsible for working together to improve the safety and efficiency of the transportation system in the area served by the TPO. All modes and concerns are addressed including: transportation issues and services for the transportation disadvantaged, public transportation, roadways, bridges, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

3 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN OVERVIEW

The LRTP is a federal requirement that addresses future transportation needs for a minimum of twenty years. The LRTP is updated every five years to confirm the validity of the transportation plan, ensure consistency with current and forecast transportation and land use conditions and to reflect the changing public and political sentiment. The LRTP is financially constrained and includes transportation projects for upgrading the transportation infrastructure within the next twenty five years.

The River to Sea TPO uses the LRTP to 1) estimate future needs and identify improvements in the pedestrian, bicycle, transit, highway and freight movement networks, 2) guide the expenditure of transportation funds, 3) ensure new transportation improvements meet community values, 4) prioritize transportation projects, and 5) promote safe and efficient transportation services. Local and state planning officials use the LRTP to select projects for inclusion in their work programs.

The specific areas addressed by the LRTP process include:

- Public Involvement Outreach Efforts
- Data Assembly and Review (Local and Regional)
- Goals, Objectives, Policies and Performance Measures
- Travel Demand Forecasting
- Financial Revenue Projections
- 25-Year Transportation System Needs Plan
- 25-Year Transportation System Cost Feasible Plan, including Interim Years
- Documentation

The success of the LRTP is dependent upon a successful public outreach effort that fosters community interaction. The process is guided by public sentiment about long term transportation investments to achieve the best possible mobility connections. The result is expanded public awareness of and support for the resulting LRTP.

4 PUBLIC OUTREACH PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the FDOT require the River to Sea 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 following performance measures provide a standard framework with which to measure public involvement techniques that are consistent with the TPO's adopted public participation plan.

A successful outreach program will include activities that involve representatives from all walks of the community. Measures of success will include both quantitative and qualitative components, such as those listed below.

- Efforts should target input from at least 750 persons.
- Outreach should include activities in all geographic areas of the county.
- Input should be collected from various demographic groups:
 - ❖ Age
 - ❖ Income
 - ❖ Ethnicity
 - ❖ Education level
 - ❖ Interest groups (business, environmental, disabled community, etc.)
- Participants should rate the quality and/or effectiveness of their experience

5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OUTREACH TOOLS

The PIP outlines the strategies to involve the general public in the development of the 2040 LRTP, including outreach and involvement of traditionally under-represented populations. In addition, the involvement of community stakeholders, agency representatives, planners, engineers, and other knowledgeable professionals in both the private and public sectors, will ensure that valuable input is obtained, key issues are identified, and solutions are generated, with the ultimate goal of achieving community consensus for the adopted LRTP.

Public outreach efforts include a need to both educate and solicit input from various members of the public. Since these efforts target people with various levels of education, interest, background, goals and desires, socio-economic status and available time, multiple public involvement outreach tools will be used for preparation of the River to Sea 2040 LRTP. Implementation procedures generally fall within the following categories:

- TPO Board and its committees
- Public Hearings
- Public Outreach Events and Workshops
- LRTP Website
- LRTP Social Media
- LRTP Newsletters, Brochures, Flyers
- Strategic Media Outreach (i.e. newspapers, television and/or radio)
- TPO's Public Involvement Contact List
- *Tell the TPO* Survey (independent work effort by the TPO)
- Press Releases

The primary tools anticipated to be used are described in the following sections.

5.1 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Website

The Internet is a major forum for the dissemination and exchange of information. The advantages of creating a project website are plentiful: it's relatively inexpensive to set up and maintain; it is simple to keep the information current; it can be entertaining to use; it can be accessed at any time; it provides an opportunity for people to offer input as well as become informed; and it can be updated and accessed routinely so that people can stay involved and informed throughout the development process.

The primary limitation of a project website is that the internet serves only those with access to it. This means that groups with lower utilization rates such as the elderly or low income may be less likely to access the planning process using this resource.

A website domain name, www.R2CMobility2040.org was chosen by the LRTP Subcommittee. The website will be updated regularly throughout the long range planning process. The nature and extent of the information included on the website will include the following general information:

- A welcome message from the Executive Director explaining the challenges faced by our community and encouraging people to become involved in shaping our plan for the future;
- An overview of the long range transportation planning process and an explanation of the approaches used by the River to Sea TPO to develop a plan;
- Information about the geographical area included in the plan and the cities that lie within its jurisdiction;
- Links to the River to Sea TPO organizational website, to surveys used to collect public input, to various local government sites within the TPO planning area and relevant FDOT sites;
- A project schedule and calendar of events showing key activities, public meetings and River to Sea TPO committee meetings; and
- Various documents and transportation projects being considered and LRTP Subcommittee meeting agendas and summaries.

5.2 Make Your Mark in 2040 Interactive Planning Sessions

Make Your Mark in 2040 (f.k.a. *Strings & Ribbons*) is an interactive planning activity that reinforces the concepts of long range planning, limited financial resources, compromising and building consensus. Preparation for the game involves limited education about transportation funding, project costs, transportation networks and planning strategies and impacted populations.

Participants are gathered into groups of six to eight members and provided with a map of the county and a limited amount of funding for projects. The group must select the projects that can be built with the available funding. The Make Your Mark activity requires participants to reach consensus regarding transportation projects and enlightens them on funding decisions that elected officials are faced with every budget cycle. Make Your Mark acts to break down social and economic barriers and encourages cooperation and collaboration among its participants.

The Make Your Mark in 2040 exercise has several advantages over more traditional public involvement. First, participants make a conscious decision which types of transportation are most important to receive funding. Second, each participant in the game experiences the constraints of budgeting as they begin to realize there are more needs than available funding. Third, people are confronted with the reality of dealing with population growth and land use development. Fourth, there are no specific skills, education or experience needed for participants to convey their opinions about transportation options and planning in their community. The small groupings and interactive nature of the exercise also encourages and empowers individuals to have a voice and offer ideas and opinions that would not typically occur in a traditional public forum. The activity also produces outcomes that serve as an influential driver of the plan's direction and project development.

Challenges associated with the activity include the required time commitment which may not appeal to some people; significant personnel resources required; and the number limited number of participants that can be accommodated in each event.

5.3 Tell the TPO Survey

The *Tell the TPO* survey is an independent work effort by the River to Sea TPO to ascertain the transportation wants, needs, problems, preferences and suggestions from residents, business community, elected officials and other stakeholders. The results can be used to inform the LRTP work effort and serve as a baseline of data that the TPO can compare against future surveying efforts in order to ascertain changing needs of the region. The survey results also add to the TPO database of interested residents, businesses, and visitors that can be utilized for public outreach efforts.

Although the exchange of information in a survey is limited, the opportunity to reach a greater number of people is very beneficial. The electronic format is also easy to tabulate and results can provide direction that assists in decision-making. Drawbacks include the brief nature of surveys which make this tool less informative for participants and less interactive than other strategies. Even so, the survey responses augment other outreach efforts and reasonable conclusions can be drawn where responses are clear.

5.4 Public Meetings

A series of public meetings will be scheduled throughout the planning area to inform citizens of the plan and to take comment on the transportation projects identified for the future. Notification for each of meeting will include a press release, notice on the LRTP project website as well as the Volusia TPO website, and e-mail notice to the River to Sea TPO Board and advisory committee members.

In addition, a public hearing will be tentatively scheduled as part of the River to Sea TPO Board meeting held on Tuesday, September 23, 2015. At this meeting, the TPO Board will vote to adopt the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

5.5 River to Sea TPO Board and Committee Coordination

A significant amount of public notice, representation and review for the development of the 2040 LRTP will also occur as part of the regular meetings of the River to Sea TPO Board, standing committees and the LRTP Subcommittee. These groups include citizen representatives, elected officials, local government staff and special interest advocates representing all portions of the planning area. In addition, public notice will be provided for each of the meetings in accordance with Florida Statutes and the adopted by-laws of the organization.

5.5.1 TPO Board

The River to Sea TPO Board membership consists of elected officials representing all local governments in the planning area, including municipal and county entities. As outlined in Florida Statutes, TPO Board is comprised of 19 voting members. In addition, there are six non-voting members that represent the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), FDOT District 5 Office and Volusia and Flagler County School Boards. These members are appointed primarily to provide information and recommendations to the River to Sea TPO Board.

The River to Sea TPO Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 9:00 a.m. and all meetings are properly noticed and open to the public. An agenda is developed in advance of the meetings and, 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." With respect to the 2040 LRTP, each agenda will describe the activities being considered or presented and provide an opportunity for citizens to address the TPO Board regarding any of these activities.

5.5.2 Technical Coordinating Committee

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) membership consists of professional transportation planning and engineering staff as appointed by each of the TPO Board members. The TCC uses their professional education and experience to review transportation related studies and information and provide recommendations, as a committee, to the TPO board.

The TCC meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 3:00 p.m. and all meetings are properly noticed and open to the public. As with the TPO Board, an agenda is developed in advance of each meeting and there is an opportunity for citizens to provide comment or be heard on any matter pertinent to the business of the organization. With respect to the development of the 2040 LRTP, each agenda will describe the activities being considered or presented and provide an opportunity for citizens to address the committee regarding these activities.

5.5.3 Citizens' Advisory Committee

The Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) membership consists of representatives from the general public as appointed by each of the TPO Board members. The CAC use their knowledge of the local community, special interests and experiences to review transportation related studies and information and provide citizen based recommendations, as a committee, to the TPO board.

The CAC meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 1:30 p.m. and all meetings are properly noticed and open to the public. As with the TPO Board, an agenda is developed in advance of each meeting and there is an opportunity for other citizens to provide comment or be heard on

any matter pertinent to the business of the organization. With respect to the development of the 2040 LRTP, each agenda will describe the activities being considered or presented and provide an opportunity for citizens to address the committee regarding these activities.

5.5.4 Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) membership consists of representatives from the public who serve as advocates for walking, cycling and other non-motorized activities. Members of the BPAC are appointed by each of the TPO Board members and use their knowledge of the local community, special interests and experiences to review transportation related studies and information and provide recommendations, as a committee, to the TPO board.

The BPAC meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 3:00 p.m. and all meetings are properly noticed and open to the public. As with the TPO Board, an agenda is developed in advance of each meeting and there is an opportunity for other citizens to provide comment or be heard on any matter pertinent to the business of the organization. With respect to the development of the 2040 LRTP, each agenda will describe the activities being considered or presented and provide an opportunity for citizens to address the committee regarding these activities.

5.5.5 Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board

The Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) membership is outlined in Florida Statute 427, Chapter 41-2.012. Generally speaking, the TDLCB consists of representatives able to advocate for the transportation disadvantaged population of the local planning area. The TDLCB use their professional education and experience to review transportation related studies and services, and provides recommendations, as a committee, to the TPO Board.

The TDLCB meets on the second Wednesday of every other month at 11:00 a.m. and all meetings are properly noticed and open to the public. As with the TPO Board, an agenda is developed in advance of each meeting and there is an opportunity for advocates and citizens to provide comment and be heard on any matter pertinent to the business of the organization. With respect to the development of the 2040 LRTP, each agenda will describe the activities being considered or presented and provide an opportunity for citizens to address the committee regarding these activities.

5.5.6 LRTP-Specific Committees

In addition to the above-referenced committees, a 2040 LRTP Subcommittee, Land-Use Subcommittee and Oversight Committee have been formed to guide the process of developing

the 2040 LRTP. The management of these committees is essential to ensure a timely and coordinated process throughout the course of the 2040 LRTP.

These committees will meet as needed to review and provide input as data and information is being developed, and at key milestones. The TPO Project Manager will schedule the meetings to be held at the River to Sea TPO offices, unless circumstances require an alternate location. An attendance roster will be maintained and meeting summaries will be distributed to members prior to the following meeting.

The 2040 LRTP Subcommittee, Land-Use Subcommittee and Oversight Committee each have key roles in the development of the plan and maintaining progress toward key milestones. The makeup of each committee has been established and their duties are described below:

- i) The **Oversight Committee** is composed of two (2) TPO Board members, the Chairman of the TCC, the Chairman of the CAC, the Chairman of the BPAC, Executive Director of the TPO (advisory), the TPO Project Manager (advisory), and a representative from the FDOT District 5 (advisory). The Oversight Committee will primarily be responsible for ensuring completion of key milestones required for plan development. Membership is included in Table 1. The committee will meet quarterly as needed.
- ii) The **2040 LRTP Subcommittee** is composed of volunteers appointed from the TCC, CAC and BPAC committees plus at least one member from the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB). Diverse representation helped to ensure that each aspect of the plan was developed with regard for a broad cross-section of the community. Membership is included in Table 2.

The LRTP Subcommittee will review the technical data involved in the development of the plan. Activities of the LRTP Subcommittee include establishing a project schedule, developing a vision and goals for the plan, reviewing technical documents and data, etc. The subcommittee was established in March 2014 and will typically meet on the fourth Friday of every month at 9:00 a.m. All meetings will be properly noticed and open to the public. As with other TPO committees, an agenda will be developed in advance of each meeting with an opportunity for citizens to provide comment or be heard on any matter pertinent to the business of the subcommittee.

- iii) The **Land-Use Subcommittee** consists of land-use planners and developers representing both the public and private sectors. The Land-Use Subcommittee will be involved in developing future year socio-economic data sets as well as growth and development alternatives.

Table 1 – Membership of Oversight Committee

Name	Representing:
Robert Gilliland	TPO Board
Marshall Shupe	TPO Board
Clay Ervin	TCC Chairman
Gilles Blais	CAC Chairman
Robert Storke	BPAC Chairman
Jean Parlow	TPO Staff (advisory)
Lois Bollenback	TPO Staff (advisory)
Claudia Calzaretta	FDOT (advisory)

Table 2 – Membership of LRTP Subcommittee

Name	Representing:
Patricia Antol	TDLCB
Mary Ellen Ottman	TDLCB
Bobby Ball	CAC
Bliss Jamison	CAC
Judy Craig	CAC
Gilles Blais	CAC
Jon Cheney	TCC
Tom Harowski	TCC
Heather Blanck	TCC
Colleen Nicoulin	BPAC
Bill Pouzar	BPAC
Wendy Hickey	BPAC

5.6 Brochure

A brochure or handout will be developed to notify the public that the River to Sea TPO is engaged in a public outreach effort to seek input in developing the 2040 LRTP. The brochure will include information about the TPO, long range planning, transportation and land-use, the Make Your Mark activity, survey and website.

A brochure offers the advantage of literature that can be printed and distributed provides a greater opportunity to reach a broad audience. Brochures can also be tailored for certain audiences (i.e. Spanish language) and are low cost. It is difficult, however, to develop a brochure that is informative yet brief. Literature is a form of one-way communication that does not yield any direct input but only encourages additional activity.

5.7 Miscellaneous Exposure

In addition to the efforts above, it is anticipated that there will be news media coverage and articles to promote the long range planning efforts of the River to Sea TPO. Presentations and work sessions will also be conducted with interested groups as warranted, such as VCARD, FCARD, ISB Coalition, chambers of commerce, business associations, transportation providers, freight interests, education and health organizations, professional associations, and state, regional, and local government agencies.