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Section 1. Introduction

The MOBILITY 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) was developed to be consistent with the requirements of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), which was signed into law on December 4, 2015. Based on the guidance provided by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in the MPO Program Management Handbook, a comprehensive checklist will be completed during the LRTP development in order to identify conformance with Federal Regulations and State Statutes. The planning process for the Pasco MPO is certified every four years as part of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/Federal Transit Administration (FTA) certification review of the Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA), including The Hillsborough MPO, Pasco MPO and Pinellas MPO. The results of the most recent Federal Certification Report were published in June 2017.

This purpose of this technical report is to document the key federal and State requirements and guidance that will shape the development of the MOBILITY 2045 LRTP consistent with the FAST Act requirements. In particular, three key sources of guidance are summarized in this technical report, with the original source guidance provided in appendices. The three key sources of guidance for conducting this review are listed below.

- 2017 Tampa Bay TMA Certification Report (June 2017)
- LRTP Expectations (Federal Strategies for Implementation Requirements for LRTP Updates–January 10, 2018)
- Florida Planning Emphasis Areas (FDOT Policy Memo – 2018)
Section 2. 2017 Certification Report – Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area

Federal law requires FHWA and FTA to jointly certify the transportation planning processes of TMAs at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census, with a population greater than 200,000. In 2010, the Tampa–St. Petersburg Urbanized Area had a population that exceeded 2.4 million people, exceeding the threshold established for a TMA. As one of three counties within the TMA, Pasco County’s urbanized population in 2017 was estimated at nearly 445,000 as published by the Florida DOT Forecasting and Trends Office. As part of the certification review for the Tampa Bay TMA, the following steps were completed.

- Site visit
- Review of planning requirements
- FHWA/FTA certification report
- Certification review closeout presentation

The following is a review of the items from the 2017 Tampa Bay TMA Certification Report pertaining to the Pasco MPO. The report summarizes the certification process, including the noteworthy practices, corrective actions and recommendations intended to ensure continuing regulatory compliance of the MPO with the federal planning requirements.

Results from the 2017 certification review remain in place until 2021 when the next certification review is scheduled to occur. The complete 2017 Certification Review for the Tampa Bay TMA can be found online at www.pascompo.net. Due to the length of this report, the Pasco MPO portion is provided in Appendix A.

Noteworthy Practices

The MPO has been actively working to incorporate concepts such as safety and collaboration into all of plans they develop. The certification review noted the following noteworthy practices in the 2017:

Safety – The MPO was commended for the development and linkage of safety performance measures within the LRTP and CMP.

Title VI and Related Requirements (ADA) – The MPO was commended for its efforts to obtain better representation among underserved groups, including racial/ethnic minorities, those with disabilities, and younger system users on its committees and in its outreach.

TMA Regional Coordination – The MPO was commended for its participation in the regional coordination efforts undertaken by the TMA.

Corrective Actions

The following corrective actions were identified in the 2017 certification review:

Transit - An Annual List of Obligated Projects for transit projects must be completed by December 31, 2017, making it available in a manner consistent with the MPO’s Public Participation Process for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
At the December 14, 2017 MPO Board Meeting, the annual list of obligations projects was amended to include federally funded transit projects in the previous fiscal year.

**Transportation Improvement Program** - The MPO needs to verify that the funding amounts are shown in Year of Expenditure (YOE) and amend the TIP to document the use of YOE to meet this requirement. The TIP must be changed by November 30, 2017.

At the November 9, 2017 MPO Board Meeting, the 2017/2018 – 2021/2022 TIP was amended such that project costs were updated to in future YOE format.

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** - The MPO must amend the 2017/2018 – 2021/2022 TIP by November 30, 2017, to provide a clear demonstration of fiscal constraint by year.

At the November 9, 2017 MPO Board Meeting, the TIP was amended in order to more clearly demonstrate fiscal constraint by year for the five years of the TIP.

The MPO adopted the Transportation Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2018/2019 – 2022/203 on June 14, 2018. With the update to the TIP in 2018, the MPO has carried forward the formats and requirements amended in 2017/2018 – 2021/2022 TIP.

**Recommendations**

Numerous recommendations resulted from the 2017 certification review, all of which are being reviewed and evaluated for integration into future efforts of the MPO. Recommendations include the following:

- **Security:** The Federal Review Team Recommended that the Pasco County MPO develop a standalone Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and perform a COOP exercise to identify any emergency processes that may need strengthening. At a minimum, the Federal Review Team recommends that the staff test the existing COOP that is housed within the County’s operations.

- **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):** The certification results recommended that the MPO review the contents of the UPWP posted online and confirm that an updated and complete UPWP is made available for viewing.

- **Public Participation Plan (PPP):** during future updates, the MPO should address the following areas of concern.
  - Ensure that libraries are equipped with the website link or other method for providing hard copy access to the PPP upon request. If the county libraries cannot be depended upon for sharing this or other MPO information with the public, then reference to them should be removed from the PPP.
  - Provide web links to specific information that is described or summarized in the PPP.
  - Include a distinct section on how the PPP was developed in consultation with all interested parties.

- **Outreach and Public Participation:** The Federal Review Team recommended that the MPO review and evaluate their processes and procedures when determining if a public hearing is required/appropriate in place of a public meeting and revise language in their planning documents to reflect the format of these meetings accordingly.
• Title VI and Related Requirements: The MPO should carefully review its procurement and contract documents in an effort to verify that the correct nondiscrimination information is present and up to date.

• Long Range Transportation Plan: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO post the supporting LRTP technical documents, which were included with the hard copy of the plan, with the LRTP document on the website.

Additionally some opportunities were identified regarding following the Scope of the Planning Process section:

• Freight Planning – The MPO has identified some freight related objectives that are integrated with the CMP that will be incorporated into the update of MPO’s MOBILITY 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan. The MPO is also looking at ways to address hotspot truck related issues through a comprehensive database for improvements to truck routes. The routes that are in need of improvement will be given a higher ranking weighted factor.

• Security Considerations in the Planning Process – The Certification Report noted the significance of safety in much of the MPO work. The linkage of the performance measures established for the CMP to the measures in the LRTP was identified as noteworthy. This use of performance measures and linking planning efforts will be incorporated into the 2045 LRTP.

**Summary**

As noted above, the certification identified a number of practices the MPO is already participating in regarding safety and freight planning. These efforts will be integrated into the 2045 LRTP by developing and integrating performance measures and including additional analysis related to freight and inclusion of freight-related stakeholders into the engagement process.
Section 3. LRTP Expectations

The Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration work with FDOT, the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) and Florida’s MPOs to identify and document expectations relating to meeting federal long range planning requirements. The following section is a summary of the Federal Strategies for Implementation Requirements for LRTP Updates for the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) which can be found in Appendix B.

Stakeholder Coordination and Input

- MPOs are required to develop specific public involvement strategies, documenting procedures, strategies and outcomes of stakeholder involvement in the planning process
- Broad stakeholder input and plan/map review should include agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation
- Measures of effectiveness for public involvement strategies should be included in the Public Participation Plan and should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of LRTP outreach, informing any changes to the strategies

Fiscal Constraint

- In the cost feasible plan, phases and costs of that phase should be documented
- Project phases include Preliminary Engineering (PE), Right of Way (ROW) and Construction. PE includes both the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) and Design phases.
- Full time span of the LRTP is at least 20-years. Show all projects and phases through the horizon year.

Technical Topics

- SHSP Consistency - Require the goals, objectives, performance measures and targets of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), which includes the SHSP, to be integrated into the LRTPs either directly or by reference. However, the specific priorities, strategies, countermeasures and projects of the HSIP are not required to be integrated.
- Freight –
  - Changes to the planning requirements now also encourage the consultation of agencies and officials planning for freight movements.
  - Planning regulations now require the goals, objectives performance measures and targets of the State Freight Plan to be integrated into the LRTPs either directly or by reference. While freight is one of the planning factors, it deserves special emphasis, and will need to play a more prominent role in future LRTPs. The MPOs need to show a concerted effort to incorporate freight stakeholders and strategies into the next LRTP.
- Environmental Mitigation/Consultation -
  - For highway projects, the LRTP must include a discussion on the types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities. The environmental mitigation discussion in the LRTP must be developed in consultation with Federal, State and Tribal wildlife, land management and regulatory agencies.
The LRTP discussion can be at a system-wide level to identify areas where mitigation may be undertaken (perhaps illustrated on a map) and what kinds of mitigation strategies, policies and/or programs may be used when these environmental areas are affected by projects in the LRTP. This discussion in the LRTP would identify broader environmental mitigation needs and opportunities that individual transportation projects might take advantage of later.

- Congestion Management Process- The congestion management process should result in multimodal system measures and strategies that are reflected in the LRTP and TIP. The measures developed for the LRTP will be consistent.
- Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Transition Plans – assist with local government compliance

**Administrative Topics**

- LRTP Documentation/Final Board Approval is required for the following:
  - The current and projected demand of persons and goods; existing and proposed facilities that serve transportation functions;
  - A description of performance measures and targets;
  - A system performance report;
  - Operational and management strategies;
  - Consideration of the results of the congestion management process;
  - Assessment of capital investment and other strategies to preserve existing and future infrastructure;
  - Transportation and transit enhancement activities;
  - Description of proposed improvements in sufficient detail to develop cost estimates;
  - Discussion of potential environmental mitigation strategies and areas to carry out the activities;
  - A cost feasible financial plan that demonstrates how the proposed projects can be implemented and includes system level operation and maintenance revenues and costs; and
  - Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities which are required to be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities, except where bicycle and pedestrian use are not permitted

- LRTP & STIP/TIP Consistency: the STIP and TIPs must be consistent with the LRTP

**New Requirements**

While not required to be addressed in LRTPs, the following new planning factors will be required for the 2050 planning process. They are presented for consideration for inclusion in the 2045 plan.

**New Planning Factors:**

- Improving the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reducing or mitigating storm-water impacts of surface transportation. The recommendation is to consult with agencies responsible for managing natural disaster risk.
• Enhancing travel and tourism. The recommendation is to consult with agencies responsible for tourism.

Transportation Performance Management

The MPO is required to describe the performance measures and the targets the MPO has selected for assessing the performance of the transportation system. The Transportation System performance Report is:

• A tool that evaluates and updates the condition of the transportation system in relation to the performance measures and targets;
• Includes for each performance measure information such as: the target set; the baseline condition at the start of the evaluation cycle; the progress achieved in meeting the targets; and
• A trend-type comparison of progress with previous performance reports.

Multimodal Feasibility

The LRTP should include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that provide for the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system (including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

Transit Asset Management

The MPO is required to set performance targets for each performance measure set by the transit agency.

Emerging Issues

Each MPO has the discretion to determine whether to address emerging topics in their LRTP at this time and the appropriate level of detail. Beginning to address these issues early on may potentially minimize the level of effort needed to achieve future compliance.

Mobility on Demand

Mobility on Demand (MOD) is an innovative, user-focused approach which leverages emerging mobility services, integrated transit networks and operations, real-time data, connected travelers, and cooperative Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to allow for a more traveler-centric, transportation system- of-systems approach, providing improved mobility options to all travelers and users of the system in an efficient and safe manner. Automated vehicles (AV) and Connected Vehicles (CV) are two components of the overall MOD model.

The preliminary five-part formal classification system for AVs is:

• Level 0: The human driver is in complete control of all functions of the car.
• Level 1: A single vehicle function is automated.
• Level 2: More than one function is automated at the same time (e.g., steering and acceleration), but the driver must remain constantly attentive.
• Level 3: The driving functions are sufficiently automated that the driver can safely engage in other activities.
• Level 4: The car can drive itself without a human driver.
CV includes technology that will enable cars, buses, trucks, trains, roads and other infrastructure, and our smartphones and other devices to “talk” to one another. Rapid advances in technology mean that these types of systems may be coming on line during the horizon of the next LRTPs. While these technologies when fully implemented will provide more opportunities to operate the transportation system better, the infrastructure needed to do so and the transition time for implementation is an area that the MPO can start to address in this next round of LRTP updates.

**Proactive Improvements**

The following issues are presented to support “proactive change in the LRTPs to help Florida continue to make positive strides in long range planning:”

**New Consultation:** Agencies that are responsible for tourism and for natural disaster risk reduction. This supports the implementation of the new planning factors (23 CFR 450.316(b))

**Summary of Public Involvement Strategies:** In order to demonstrate consistency with Title VI and other anti-discrimination provisions, MPOs should summarize the outreach information. This information should be derived from the MPO’s public involvement plan elements. The public involvement summary should be supported by more detailed information, such as the specific strategies used, feedback received and feedback responses, findings, etc. The detailed information should then be referenced and included in the form of a technical memorandum or report that can be appended to the LRTP, or included in a separate, standalone document that is also available for public review in support of the LRTP.

**Impact Analysis/Data Validation:** The LRTP needs to document the overall transportation needs of the metropolitan area and be able to demonstrate how public feedback and input helped shape the resulting plan.

**FDOT Revenue Forecast:** FDOTs Revenue Forecast should be included in the appendices.

**Sustainability and Livability in Context:** MPOs are encouraged to identify and suggest contextual solutions for appropriate transportation corridors within their area and utilize the flexibilities provided in the federal funding programs to improve the transportation network for all users.

**Scenario Planning:** If the MPO chooses to develop these scenarios, they are encouraged to consider a number of factors including potential regional investment strategies, assumed distribution of population and employment, a scenario that maintains baseline conditions for identified performance measures, a scenario that improves the baseline conditions, revenue constrained scenarios, and include estimated costs and potential revenue available to support each scenario.
Section 4: Planning Emphasis Areas

The following areas were identified by FDOT for consideration when updating their Unified Work Plan and will be integrated into the 2045 LRTP as appropriate. The Florida Planning Emphasis Areas 2018 memo can be found in Appendix C.

- Rural Transportation Planning – MPOs are encouraged to coordinate with rural government entities, internal and external to planning boundaries that are impacted by transportation movements between regions.

The Pasco MPO is coordinating with adjacent counties to create a seamless transportation system between regions and is working to ensure that rural areas of the county have access to transportation services.

- Transportation Performance Measures – FHWA has finalized six performance measures to implement the performance measure framework established in MAP-21 and the FAST Act. FDOT has established targets for each of these areas that measure safety, roadway condition, traffic congestion, freight movement efficiency, environmental protection and project delivery delay reduction and the MPO has adopted targets.

The Pasco MPO has embraced the use of performance measures and targets, incorporating them into the CMP and other planning efforts. Mobility 2040 developed targets and Mobility 2045 will continue to build on strategies and investments made to reach the targets.

- ACES (Automated/Connected/Electric/Shared-use) Vehicles – Adopting and supporting innovative technologies and business practices such as ACES, supports all seven goals of the Florida Transportation Plan and the federal planning factors found in the FAST Act. While the impact of these technologies is uncertain, planning for their integration is important to prepare for the planning horizon.

The MPO is beginning to address the challenges and opportunities presented by ACES by including analysis of corridors to identify ATMS candidates as well as developing policies that support the integration of technology as it becomes available. It will also be important to include ACES supportive infrastructure in corridor recommendations.
Appendix A. 2017 Certification Report, Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (June 2017)
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Executive Summary

Federal Law requires the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to jointly certify the transportation planning processes of Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years (a TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the US Census, with a population over 200,000). A certification review generally consists of four primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning documents (in advance of the site visit), the development and issuance of a FHWA/FTA certification report, and a certification review closeout presentation to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) governing board.

The joint FHWA/FTA Federal Review Team conducted site visit reviews of the Tampa Bay TMA on March 27 - 30, 2017, and April 11 - 12, 2017. The Tampa Bay TMA is comprised of the Hillsborough MPO, Pasco County MPO, and Forward Pinellas. Since the last certification review in 2013, this TMA has made significant improvements to its transportation planning processes, including its regional coordination efforts.

This certification review was conducted to highlight best practices, identify opportunities for improvements, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. The Federal Review Team identified 18 noteworthy practices, 17 recommendations and three corrective actions during the review, which can be found in the Findings/Conclusions section of this report.

Based on the overall results of the certification review, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the Tampa Bay TMA, comprised of the Hillsborough MPO, Forward Pinellas, and Pasco County MPO, substantially meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C, subject to the TMA satisfactorily addressing the corrective actions outlined in this report. The TMA is encouraged to provide FHWA and FTA with evidence of the satisfactory completion of the corrective actions prior to the noted deadlines. The MPO’s progress in meeting the corrective actions will be monitored and evaluated. This certification will remain in effect until June 2021.
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Overview of the Certification Process

Under provisions of 23 CFR 450.334 (a) and 49 CFR 613.334 (a), the FHWA and the FTA must jointly certify the planning process of TMAs “not less often than once every four years” (a TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the US Census, with a population over 200,000). This four-year cycle runs from the date of the previous jointly issued Certification report. The primary purpose of a Certification Review is to formalize the continuing oversight and evaluation of the planning process.

A certification review generally consists of four primary activities. These activities include: a “desk audit”, which is a review of the TMA’s main planning process documents (e.g. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); a “site visit” with staffs from the TMA’s various transportation planning partners (e.g. the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), local/regional transit service provider, and other participating State/local agencies), including opportunities for local elected officials and the general public to provide comments on the TMA planning process; the preparation of a “FHWA/FTA TMA Certification Review Report” that documents the certification review’s findings; and a formal FHWA Florida Division presentation of the review’s findings at a future MPO Board Policy meeting.

The Tampa Bay TMA is comprised of three MPOs: Hillsborough, Pasco County, and Forward Pinellas. The certification review of the TMA includes a review of the transportation planning processes for each of these MPOs and regional coordination activities. The review for the Hillsborough MPO was held April 11 - 12, 2017, in Tampa Florida. The review for Forward Pinellas was held March 27 - 28, 2017, in Clearwater, Florida. Lastly, the review for the Pasco County MPO was held March 29 - 30, 2017, in New Port Richey, Florida.

During these site visits the Federal Review Team met with the staffs of the Hillsborough, Pasco County, and Forward Pinellas, the FDOT, the associated transit authorities, committee representatives, other partnering agencies, and the public. See Appendices A, C and E for a list of review team members and site visit participants for each MPO, Appendices B, D and F contain the agendas for all site visits, Appendix G provides a copy of the Public Notice provided for all three public meetings which announced the Federal Certification Review public meeting. A public meeting was held separately for each MPO for this certification. The public meeting for the Hillsborough MPO was April 12, 2017. The public meeting for the Forward Pinellas was held Wednesday, March 29, 2017, and the meeting for the Pasco County MPO was held Monday, March 27, 2017.

The purpose of these public meetings is to inform the public about Federal transportation planning requirements and allow the public the opportunity to provide input about the transportation planning process, more specifically how the process is meeting the needs of the area. These meetings were advertised in local newspapers, direct mail, and on Hillsborough, Pasco, and Forward Pinellas individual MPO websites.
For those that could not attend the public meetings or who did not want to speak at the public meeting, contact information for the Federal Review Team was provided. Members of the public were given 30 days from the date of the public meeting to mail, fax or email their comments; they may also request a copy of the certification review report via these methods. Additional comments were received within the 30-day period. A summary of the public comments for all three MPOs, along with how they were incorporated into this report, is included in Appendix H. Appendix H also contains public comments either via public meeting, via MPO staff and website, via FHWA email), or via FHWA mailing address.
Part 1: Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization

Section I. Previous Certification Findings Status/Update

The following is a summary of the previous recommendations made by the Federal Review Team to the Hillsborough MPO. The report for the MPO’s last certification review was published in July 2013. There were no Corrective Actions identified in the prior report.

A. Recommendations

1. Agreements: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO re-visit and revise, where necessary, the 2004 Interlocal Agreement and at a minimum provide an updated date of the most recent review of the Agreement.

   Update: The ICAR Agreement was updated and executed on September 4, 2014, and amended on August 19, 2015, to add the School Board as a voting member.

2. Safety: The planning regulations call for the transportation planning process to be consistent with Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) [23 CFR 450.306(h)]. While the Federal Review Team commends the Hillsborough County MPO staff for their efforts related to Safety, it was not clear during the site visit review how the staff had integrated concepts included in the SHSP into their planning process. Since the FDOT recently updated this plan in 2012, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO review this plan and continue to coordinate with FDOT to ensure that the goals, objectives and safety plans of the MPO are consistent with the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and begin documenting this connection in the next LRTP. The updated plan can be found at the following link: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/SHSP2012/SHSP-2012.shtm

   Update: During the development of the 2040 LRTP and Policy, the MPO considered safety as their number one goal and are aligned and consistent with the FDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The MPO explicitly considered eight focus areas: aggressive driving, intersection crashes, vulnerable road users, lane departure crashes, impaired driving, at-risk drives, distracted driving, traffic data, and developed performance measures for reducing crashes.

3. Public Participation Plan (PPP): As with most organizations, much if not all the MPO’s documents are available via the website, as well as in paper format at libraries and other public facilities. However, the plan is so extensive that downloading the full document may be time consuming, creating an unintentional barrier to public access. The MPO should consider breaking its electronic PPP into parts so that the public may more quickly access essential information. For example, a dropdown menu would allow the public to choose the body of the PPP, or an appendix such as the MPO’s toolbox, strategies or acronyms list. The
MPO may also wish to consider reviewing the plan in an effort to remove redundant or extraneous information.

**Update:** The PPP & Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) report landing page on the MPO website was redesigned and reformatted to comply with the recommendation on July 13, 2016. The reports are now easily downloadable and divided into sections for interested parties to review the reports.

4. **Tribal Coordination:** The Federal Review Team strongly encourages MPO staff to work with the FDOT to consider alternative strategies to effectively engage the Seminole Tribe of Florida. The MPO should ensure that tribal coordination outreach is documented and kept as a part of the MPO’s documentation diary. This process will prove extremely valuable as the MPO prepares to update the LRTP.

**Update:** The MPO coordinates with the FDOT District 7 Environmental Administrator and since the last Certification review added one new contact for Seminole Tribe of Florida to the stakeholder database. However, the MPO has not received any feedback from the contact.

5. **Title VI (Nondiscrimination Program):** Hillsborough MPO annually reviews its Title VI/Nondiscrimination Program documents for sufficiency and to ensure nondiscrimination in its programs, services and activities in compliance with 23 CFR 200.9(b)(5) and (6). The MPO will shortly undertake its review of the program for 2013. As it does so, FHWA recommends that the MPO ensure that its program documents contain:

   a. The name and contact information for the employee designated the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator.

   b. An organization chart that shows direct, dotted line access from the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator to the Executive Director of the MPO.

   c. Consistent use of nondiscrimination language and the protected classes wherever the MPO references nondiscrimination. The MPO may wish to consider developing a standard nondiscrimination statement that contains a link with the full policy and complaint filing procedure. The MPO may then ensure optimum access by placing the language and link on all documents meant for the public.

**Update:** The MPO website includes name and contact information for the Title VI Specialist/Coordinator. See the attached link below: [http://www.planhillsborough.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Hillsborough-MPO-Title-VI-Complaint-Procedure1.pdf](http://www.planhillsborough.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Hillsborough-MPO-Title-VI-Complaint-Procedure1.pdf)
An organization chart has been updated to reflect the direct line from the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator to the MPO Executive Director, see the attached link below:
https://planhillsborough.sharepoint.com/MPO/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?folderid=04b903e824a664d9ba8ebd25934fa43f2&authkey=ATPdpHrkjVeejL793uAfg6s

The MPO has consistent, correct language and protected classes reference wherever nondiscrimination is referenced. Also, the MPO website includes the contact information on all MPO committee agendas, publications for LRTP, TIP, and UPWP see link below:

6. **Title VI (Nondiscrimination Program):** Hillsborough MPO uses protected class and underserved community data to ensure Environmental Justice through targeted outreach and public involvement. The MPO also has solid examples of using demographic data as part of prioritizing services and measuring the effectiveness of its activities. Due to unavailability of all the recent census tools, the MPO has not yet completed its Community Impact Assessment. Once in place, the MPO should begin using this information to track or trend possible discrimination and to analyze plans/projects to assess equitable distribution of benefits and avoidance of disproportionate adverse impacts. FTA has already released specific guidance on how to collect, analyze and use demographic data in evaluating service equity, and FHWA will be providing additional information in the coming year. In the meantime, the Review Team urges the MPO to continue its innovative exploration of data in relationship to its work products to identify benefits and burdens, and to ensure nondiscrimination.

**Update:** The MPO has been expanding their knowledge and expertise with using demographic data as part of prioritizing services and measuring the effectiveness of their activities. The MPO updated agendas, created a webpage that clearly explains their commitment to Non-discrimination and other Requirements and has a direct link for the public to contact the Title VI/Nondiscrimination/Coordinator.

7. **Transportation Improvement Program (Fiscal Constraint):** The Federal Review Team acknowledges that the Hillsborough MPO includes broad language related to fiscal constraint within the financial plan and financial summary sections of the 2012/13-2016/17 TIP. Although these explanations convey an understanding of fiscal constraint, the Federal Review Team recommends additional documentation to support the TIP in displaying fiscal constraint beyond the general statement that the TIP is constrained by year and the MPO adheres to the FDOT Work Program and Capital Improvement Program. For example, through the use of additional text or illustrative tools, such as tables or figures
consistent with MPO statements, the MPO will be transparent to the public on the TIP’s fiscal constraint.

**Update:** FDOT D-7 provides funding to the MPO and from there a summary table was provided to illustrate funding broken down by Federal, State, and Local to reflect how fiscal constraint is made more transparent for the public. [http://www.planhillsborough.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/FINAL-TIP-16-17_Amended_02-08-17.pdf](http://www.planhillsborough.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/FINAL-TIP-16-17_Amended_02-08-17.pdf)

8. **Transportation Improvement Program:** The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO include information in the executive summary of the TIP, which details for the public the procedures for revisions, amendments and administrative modifications, actions or adjustments made to the TIP, in accordance with CFR 450.326. The MPO is encouraged to coordinate and align the inclusion of this information with information included in the public participation plan. Providing this information in the executive summary of this planning document ensures that a member of the public is fully aware of the amendment/modification process without having to refer to another document to get the information.

**Update:** The MPO’s TIP webpage has a section devoted to TIP amendments and it includes a link for future meetings of the board and committees, which all provide an opportunity for public comment. The MPO follows the process outlined in the MPO’s Public Participation Plan, for revisions, amendments, and administrative modifications. The TIP contains a reference to the PPP and provides a link so that the public can be aware of the specific amendments and modification procedures. [http://www.planhillsborough.org/transportation-improvement-program-tip/](http://www.planhillsborough.org/transportation-improvement-program-tip/)

**Section II. Boundaries and Organization (23 CFR 450.310, 312, 314)**

**A. Description of Planning Area**

The Tampa Bay Metropolitan Area is the 18th largest metropolitan statistical area in the country, and according to the 2013 census estimate, has increased by 3.1% for a total of over 2.8 million people. Hillsborough County, along with Pinellas and Pasco counties are part of the Tampa Bay TMA.

The Hillsborough MPO transportation planning area includes the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City, as well as the entire Hillsborough County area. The County is bordered by Pinellas County on the west, Manatee County on the south, Polk County on the east, and Pasco County on the north.
Hillsborough MPO’s population, according to the results of the 2010 census, is over 1.2 million residents. Between 2010 and 2013 the Hillsborough MPO has grown 5.1%, which is higher than the 4% growth rate for the State of Florida during that period.

Hillsborough County’s population increased by nearly 50,000 residents between 2013 and 2016 respectively (from 1,263,050 to 1,311,360), according to the results of the American Community Survey (ACS). Also within the same timeframe, the County’s housing stock increased by approximately 30,000 units respectively (from 539,526 to 568,470). The MPO noted that much of the population growth and housing stock increase occurred in the unincorporated county, including the suburban communities of Riverview, FishHawk, and Apollo Beach.

The MPO noted that since the last Cert Review in 2013, the growth rate for Hispanics and/or Latinos has increased more than other ethnic groups. The ACS showed that in 2013, this group accounted for 25.3% of Hillsborough County’s total population, and the 2016 numbers showed an increase in the County’s Hispanic/Latino population percentage to 26.1%.

B. Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure

The Hillsborough MPO Board is comprised of sixteen voting members, including elected officials appointed from each of the following local governments and representatives from the transportation authorities noted below. Voting members include the City of Tampa (three members), Hillsborough County Commission (five members), City of Plant City (one member), City of Temple Terrace (one member), the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) Authority (one member), Hillsborough County Aviation Authority (HCAA) (one member), Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority (one member), and the Tampa Port Authority (one member). A representative from the Hillsborough City-County Planning Commission and Hillsborough County School Board also serve as voting members. The voting structure of the MPO is one vote per member. Membership from the local governments is based on the proportion of the total population that resides within each jurisdiction.
The overall MPO organization/structure has changed since the last certification review. The Executive Director of the MPO is appointed by the MPO Board. The MPO staff provides day-to-day transportation planning expertise to the MPO and executes the direction of the MPO Board and its advisory committees. The Hillsborough MPO has several standing committees including: the Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC), Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Policy Committee, Livable Roadways Committee (LRC), Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Committee, and the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB).

C. Agreements

The MPO’s agreements have been reviewed and substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314 (a).

Section III. Scope of the Planning Process (23 CFR 450.306)

A. Transportation Planning Factors

23 CFR 450.306 requires that the metropolitan transportation planning process explicitly consider and analyze a number of specific planning factors that reflect sound planning principles. The Hillsborough MPO addresses the required planning factors throughout the planning process and in the development of transportation planning products such as the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP. The planning factors are also incorporated into the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the LRTP.

B. Air Quality

The Hillsborough MPO is currently in an attainment area for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). However, the MPO seeks out and attends courses related to Air Quality and Climate Change when available, and the Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission provides status reports on air quality annually to the board and several committees.

C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Activities

The Hillsborough MPO incorporates bicycle and pedestrian planning in the development of its LRTP through several strategies that include the coordination and collaboration with other planning partners. The Hillsborough MPO, Pasco County MPO, and Forward Pinellas all participate in the new regional Tri-County Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

The MPO has a BPAC that plays an important role in leading the planning for these activities. The BPAC works closely with the community to solicit input for bicycle/pedestrian facilities and includes disabled representation on its committee.
The MPO is updating its Comprehensive Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans. This effort has a regional focus for adding new trails and side paths, and utilizes data and information from neighboring bicycle/pedestrian plans including: Tampa Walk-Bike Plan, Tampa/Hillsborough County Greenways Plans, and Temple Terrace Multi-modal plan.

The MPO has undertaken an analysis to identify needed connections in bicycle/pedestrian trails and the gaps in those facilities on bridges that cross the Hillsborough River. The MPO is also conducting an evaluation of the existing conditions of bicycle and pedestrian facilities which includes analysis of destinations and origins from the neighborhoods and looking at commercial and other economic locations.

The MPO has completed several bicycle and pedestrian planning studies that have included: pedestrian accessibility to transit, providing safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities, connecting neighborhoods and parks, providing a network of multi-use trail facilities throughout the county, connecting bike and pedestrian planning to complete streets planning, and identifying alternative options for enhancing pedestrian and bicycle travel.

The MPO planning process also analyzes bicycle/pedestrian investment projects in relationship to the performance measures in the LRTP. One performance measure is to reduce crashes and vulnerability with the criteria being the project’s effect on total fatal and bicycle/pedestrian crashes.

In 2016, Hillsborough County received a grant from Aetna and the American Public Health Association to assist neighborhoods in Tampa in “food desert” areas with access to affordable food nutrition through walking and bicycling.

D. Transit

The Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) is the primary provider of transit service in Hillsborough County. HART operates 162 fixed route buses; 36 ADA para-transit vehicles and three streetcars. According to the National Transit Database (2014), HART provides over 15.4 million transit trips per year (all modes) and reports its weekday ridership at approximately 51,644; with 27,495 on Saturdays, and 16,983 on Sundays. Hillsborough County is also served with express routes from the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) and with the van pool and commuter assistance program from the Tampa Bay Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA).

HART serves on the Hillsborough MPO board and several MPO subcommittees (Citizen Advisory, Technical Advisory, Bicycle/Pedestrian, Transportation Disadvantaged, and Livable Roadways). HART is closely involved in the MPO planning process with the review of the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP through the various subcommittees. There are also members of the MPO board that serve on the HART board. The above working relationships have established a high level of cooperation between HART and the MPO in the transportation planning process for the metropolitan area.
It is a common practice for HART and the MPO to coordinate on various major planning studies. A few of the studies include: Tampa Bay Express, Transit Assets and Opportunities (a study of expanding commuter use of Tampa’s streetcar and freight rail corridors), South Shore transit circulator, Tampa Innovation District, Northwest County bus service review, and a Maintenance Facility Feasibility Study. The MPO also coordinated with HART in conducting the 2014 onboard ridership survey and participated in the transit feasibility study. During the public meeting, comments were received about area transit operations, including ridership, bus schedules, shuttle buses, phone apps, and ridership studies. The comments are included in the report at Appendix H. FTA suggests that this issue be addressed via the local collaborative planning process.

The MAP-21/FAST Act established the requirement for a performance management approach to the transportation planning process. Towards this effort, HART has collaborated with the MPO in the development and sharing of performance data. For example, HART provides data to the MPO on its routes regarding level of service and location that feeds into the analysis of performance measures in the LRTP.

The MPO is the sub-recipient of FTA Section 5305(d) Statewide and Metropolitan Planning program funding awarded and passed through from FDOT. The FTA Apportionment for Section 5307 Urbanized Area formula funds is to the Tampa-St. Petersburg UZA, which includes HART, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), Pasco County Public Transit (PCPT) and the Tampa Bay Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA). HART, PSTA and PCPT are all FTA designated recipients. There is a split agreement in place that is applied to the UZA Apportionment to divide the funding between each transit agency. The split agreement is provided to FTA annually. After the funds are divided, each transit agency submits an application to FTA for the Section 5307 funds. Since 2013, TBARTA is also included in the annual split of 5307 funds as a Direct Recipient. Transit funding is also provided to HART by FDOT. HART staff and the Hillsborough MPO staff collaborate to establish project funding priorities.

E. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The Hillsborough MPO has an ITS Committee that acts as a forum to discuss operations and maintenance issues and to review performance measures. The committee meets quarterly to discuss ITS issues and provides the opportunity to exchange information on new ITS projects. Examples of items discussed from a recent meeting were varied and detailed, including subjects such as autonomous transit and a crash mapping tool. The meetings are well attended and fully documented on the Hillsborough MPO’s website: (http://www.planhillsborough.org/calendar/action~agenda/tag_ids~664/).

The ITS committee also evaluates funding project requests through the MPO’s TIP process.
The ITS Master Plan was updated in 2013 just after the completion of the last TMA certification review. While the plan was developed and approved some time ago, it is constantly referred to, and the projects related to its implementation are continuously updated and implemented. The plan is a comprehensive document identifying the most congested areas in the county and appropriate actions that can be taken to assist in alleviating congestion through ITS methods and technologies. The regional architecture is fundamental to all the strategies, needs, and projects identified in the ITS Master Plan. In addition to coordination of the ITS Master Plan, the MPO’s focus has continued extensively on coordinating the planning process with other implementing agencies including FDOT, the local governments, law enforcement agencies, HART and other partners. The MPO makes sure that investments are reflected accurately in the ITS Master Plan, as the metropolitan system continues to be developed by multiple partners; and that strategies and projects that are identified as next steps in the ITS Master Plan are well coordinated with the implementers’ individual ITS or Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) plans. All of these investments are consistent with the regional architecture.

**Recommendation:** The Federal Review Team offers one recommendation pertaining to ITS. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

**F. Freight Planning**

The Hillsborough MPO area is a major hub of freight movement in both exports and imports in Central Florida. The FHWA’s Freight Analysis Framework indicates that the total domestic freight on highways of the Tampa Bay Region will increase from 295 million tons in 2011 to nearly 496 million tons in 2040, and that 97% of all freight moved within the region will be moved by truck. Hillsborough County has 12 large manufacturing base and distribution areas. Also, these facilities are the second largest contributor to freight in the Tampa Bay Region, with moving cargo into and out of the central Tampa and the Port by CSX Transportation railroad. By 2040 it is projected that nearly 24 million truck trips will move through the Tampa Bay area along the highways annually, including the robust rail network of CSX.

The 2040 LRTP contains a specific goal to promote freight movement, and multimodal freight needs and considerations are interwoven throughout the goals for improving system continuity and connectivity, increasing safety for the system users and promoting multi-modal solutions. The LRTP identified the freight activity centers, corridors, and distribution routes within the MPO area. The LRTP also used the results of an analysis – which identified freight flows, the routes various freight providers used, and freight concerns and potential improvements – in the development of the Cost Feasible Plan.
G. Security Considerations in the Planning Process

The MPO’s 2040 LRTP contains a safety goal that includes increasing the security of the transportation system for all users. This security element also incorporates the goals from local transit provider safety and security planning review processes, plans and programs. Security considerations were used in the development of the 2040 LRTP, and a UPWP task was identified that included the testing and evaluation of the MPO’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). A COOP plan is in place for both the MPO and Planning Commission, and was tested on September 1, 2016, due to Tropical Storm Hermine. The MPO’s COOP is consistent with the Hillsborough County’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. The Imagine 2040 Plan also includes a security performance measure that ties funding levels to different levels of resilience to storm surge and flooding.

H. Safety Considerations in the Planning Process

Safety is Goal 1 in the 2040 LRTP and is consistent with the Florida Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). In assessing needs for the 2040 LRTP, the MPO explicitly considered the SHSP’s eight (8) focus areas (aggressive driving, intersection crashes, vulnerable road users, lane departure crashes, impaired driving, at-risk drivers, distracted driving, and traffic safety). The staff works closely with many transportation providers, agencies, professionals, businesses and citizens to ensure that the goals, objectives and safety plans of the MPO are consistent with the FDOT’s SHSP and are documented in the 2040 LRTP. The MPO is also an active member of FDOT District 7’s Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST). Since the last Federal TMA Certification, the MPO has focused on creating safety-related improvements using safety studies and short ranged, funded, and implementable transit and highway projects. The MPO’s IMAGINE 2040 LRTP explicitly addresses goals to improve safety and security for all users in relation to transportation (biking, walking, transit, auto and freight).

The MPO also went a step further and created an investment program in the 2040 Plan to address these safety problems, with a goal of reducing crashes on all roads by 20-50% by 2040. The Imagine 2040 LRTP Plan will focus on programs to address safety that will implement three levels of funding. The first level proposes to spend over $498 million by 2040 and anticipates reducing crashes by 9%, fatal crashes by 9.7%, and bicycle & pedestrian crashes by 136 crashes per year.

The second level intends to spend over $919 million by 2040 and reduce total crashes by 20%, fatal crashes by 20%, and reduce bicycle and pedestrian crashes by 294 crashes per year. The third investment level proposes to spend over $2.2 billion by 2040 and is anticipated to reduce total crashes by 50.8%, fatal crashes by 50.7%, and reduce bicycle and pedestrian crashes by 704 crashes per year.
The MPO also has a Project Level 2 ½ that will address (450 miles) of complete street treatment and (300 miles) of new sidewalks that are projected to lower the total number of crashes and fatal crashes by over 20% by investing approximately $1.3 billion by 2040. The MPO considers safety as a top priority and the development of the Vision Zero Plan (2016-2017) will aid in increasing the safety of the transportation system for all users.

The MPO is heavily involved in Safety, and Safety is a key component of their transportation planning process. Hillsborough is currently working to develop a Vision Zero Plan. Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. (http://visionzeronetwork.org/about/what-is-vision-zero/)

The action plan for Hillsborough involved a lot of brainstorming, and the MPO Board’s Policy Committee members have hosted and championed the meetings of the Vision Zero Coalition. There are four action items for the vision zero process: Paint saves lives; One message, many voices; Consistent and fair; and the Future will not be like the past. Four workshops were held to raise community awareness and to gain input on the action plan. The MPO has participated as a member of the Vision Zero Network, where MPOs across the nation who are seeking to develop or implement action plans can discuss their efforts, challenges, and opportunities to create vision zero plans. A Facebook page has been created to get local citizens attention and involvement, and a speaker’s bureau is currently underway. There has also been local media involvement, including the broadcasting of victim’s and family’s stories. A Vision Zero goal resolution was adopted by the Tampa City Council, Hillsborough Commission, Temple Terrace City Council, Plant City Commission, and by the School Board of Hillsborough County.

One of the goals that the MPO is looking at achieving for the 2040 Imagine LRTP is safety and making the region safer for bicyclist and pedestrians. The state of Florida and the Tampa Bay area lead the nation in bicycle and pedestrian fatalities. Several plans the MPO has created address bicycle and pedestrian safety. The Comprehensive Bicycle Plan, the 2025 Hillsborough MPO Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan and the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan all discuss safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.

**Noteworthy Practice:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice pertaining to Safety in the transportation planning process. For more details about this item, please see Section X.
Section IV. Unified Planning Work Program (23 CFR 450.308)

The Hillsborough MPO adopted their most recent UPWP in May 2016. The Hillsborough MPO FY 2016/17 – 2017/18 UPWP covers transportation planning activities/products for two fiscal years and contains sufficient description of the costs and activities the MPO plans to complete. All eligible staff and contractual charges are compiled in quarterly grant invoices. Any invoice must be approved by an MPO project manager and his/her supervisor prior to payment to the consultant or vendor. Invoices are accompanied by quarterly grant reports to document staff activities and progress towards completion of end products listed in the UPWP.

Since staff is shared between the MPO and Planning Commission, it is important to ensure time is allotted and charged to the proper entity. The Planning Commission, the MPO's sponsoring agency, uses timekeeping software to track staff time charged to various UPWP tasks and grant-funded deliverables, as well as hours charged against non-MPO work. Staff charges are monitored continuously to ensure they are within authorized budget limits.

A two-year UPWP and budget is developed based on available federal and State funds. In addition to budget summary tables of all major UPWP tasks, each task also has an estimated budget detail table by fiscal year that breaks down personnel services, consultant services, travel, direct expenses, and the indirect rate. The MPO utilizes an indirect cost rate that FDOT approves and is updated annually. Indirect costs are charged to federal grants consistent with the indirect cost rate allocation plan included in the UPWP.

HART staff works closely with the MPO staff to identify transit needs, priorities and candidate projects, as well as planning studies for inclusion in the UPWP. The MPO also coordinates with local agencies, FDOT, and representatives of the Port Tampa Bay and the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority to ascertain planning projects that address specific community needs for consideration in the UPWP.

Hillsborough MPO also collaborates with neighboring MPOs to identify and develop regional tasks for the UPWP. This coordination supports consistent reporting in the respective MPO UPWPs to ensure that regional coordination continues to occur. Each MPO or TPO dedicates a portion of their UPWP budget to support the regional tasks. Under the interlocal agreement, a lead MPO for any regional task may be designated by the group to financially administer contracts using the funds approved by the other MPOs in their UPWPs for this work.

As part of this certification, the Federal Review Team conducted a financial review of the Hillsborough MPO. The primary objective of this financial review was to establish the level of reliability, effectiveness, and compliance with Federal requirements that can be placed on the MPO’s internal controls in order to review, analyze, and submit reimbursement for federal funds. Primary emphasis was placed on determining the
The adequacy and completeness of management internal controls, documentation, and standard operating procedures.

The Hillsborough MPO has written policies and procedures in place for managing financial and accounting activities. Their operating policy for Grants Management outlines internal controls for compliance with regard to both State and Federal funding. The Financial Manager is responsible overall for the monitoring of fiscal compliance with grant requirements that establishes accountability. Each year the grant accounts are audited by an independent firm that also audits Hillsborough County. The operating procedures include an entire section that addresses the process of managing contracts and purchasing. The guidelines in this document appear to provide for sufficient internal controls for financial management.

The Hillsborough MPO also provided evidence of their participation in a timekeeping system referred to as “Dovico” and “Kronos”. Dovico is a system that tracks weekly staff hours to work program tasks and time off. Kronos is another time keeping system used to track and manage timecards, requests for leave, and payroll. These systematic approaches to timekeeping and payroll provide for adequate accountability and approvals.

The results of the financial review disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other findings that are required to be reported under FHWA standards or policies. Furthermore, the Federal Review Team has reasonable assurance that Hillsborough MPO’s financial processes and internal controls are compliant with applicable laws, regulations, policies and agreements to ensure general financial integrity.

**Noteworthy Practice**: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice pertaining to the UPWP. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

**Section V. Interested Parties (23 CFR 450.316)**

**A. Outreach and Public Participation**

Already extensive, Hillsborough MPO has nonetheless significantly expanded its Public Involvement since the last federal certification. Outreach is creative, diverse and targeted. Moreover, each project, study or plan uses multiple public involvement strategies designed to best engage partners, stakeholders and the public. Among many examples of its involvement, the MPO’s use of social media has grown, now reaching thousands of users. Like other larger MPOs, Hillsborough has a dedicated social media staff member who touts Twitter and similar products as a ‘fun form of art’ that cross-supports other agencies, serves as a real-time news feed and provides a platform for public input that is transparent and often thought provoking.
The MPO maintains a list of all questions and comments, and each receives a response from the staff member responsible for the applicable program or plan. Among other electronic outreach efforts, the MPO produces e-newsletters specific to transportation and related issues that are distributed to a Constant Contact list of over 7000 recipients, as well as more general posting via the web. The distribution list has grown significantly in the past few years, almost doubling since the last certification. The MPO has further advanced the use of electronic and real time polling, particularly for controversial projects where opposition voices can quell those of others in public meetings. Not only do these polls provide faster and more varied responses, participation is much higher than via traditional outreach methods, due to both the ease of participation and to innovative MPO marketing, such as placing poll links inside fortune cookies for distribution at community events. While Hillsborough sees value in expanding electronic participation, it has not lost sight of the need for traditional involvement methods. Print media sources include the daily free newspaper, as well as Spanish language and minority focused papers. The MPO also relies on the county’s extensive services and facilities to distribute information in public buildings and via mail using property tax rolls.

Responding to a certification recommendation about the size and complexity of its Public Participation Plan (PPP), the MPO divided the document into logical segments, each with a dedicated link. The MPO also regularly updates the Plan and the resulting measures of effectiveness report, most recently in 2016. Nevertheless, the MPO does not appear to rely on the PPP as a master document, but rather a policy document that must be updated to fit an ever-growing program. The PPP is among the plans easily located on the MPO’s webpage, but is obviously not where the MPO expects the public to go to 'be involved', which has a separate and dedicated tab. All of these efforts could and probably should lead the MPO to eventually reexamine the PPP, ensuring that it meets the requirements of 23 CFR 450.316 but eliminating extraneous language that serves no practical purpose in guiding public involvement.

The MPO ensures participation of minority and low income populations by partnering with health care and social other committees, and holding or attending outreach events in targeted communities. As with all MPOs, Hillsborough struggles with demographic representation on its advisory committees. To address this problem, the MPO took the firm step of setting aside seats on its Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), for representatives of minority and other traditionally underserved communities. Affirmative measures like this can be unpopular with governing boards, and the Review Team applauds the MPO for its proactivity. Public involvement by committee is only as effective as it is representative of the population.

**Noteworthy Practice and Recommendations:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice and offers two recommendations related to outreach and public participation. For more details about these items, please see Section X.
B. Tribal Coordination

Since the last Certification Review, the Environmental Administrator from FDOT District 7 identified one additional contact for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. The MPO has a long-established practice of sending information regarding LRTP and TIP amendments and updates directly to the Seminole Tribe. However, the MPO has not had any response thus far. The MPO acknowledges that Tribal coordination is an area they hope to strengthen. The Federal Review Team encourages staff to continue to seek feedback from the Tribe regarding the transportation planning process and to document all public outreach efforts.

C. Title VI and Related Requirements

The Hillsborough MPO continues to make meaningful nondiscrimination efforts in the development and implementation of planning products and other services. Noted in the last certification report, the MPO has advanced its partnership with health services agencies, both as part of better integrating transportation and land use planning, and also in ensuring that planning products meet the needs of vulnerable communities. Three notable examples are the MPO’s George Road Health Impact study, researching the impacts of transportation on air quality and preexisting health conditions in a predominantly Hispanic area; Garden Steps, a competitive grant for connecting green spaces in an effort to improve health transportation choices; and Food Access, a project in cooperation with the University of South Florida (USF) to address a “food desert” in the University Area of Tampa. While other planning organizations are just beginning to appreciate the myriad benefits and burdens of health and transportation, Hillsborough MPO has a solid lead in exploring available funding and building the necessary partnerships.

The MPO has taken further steps to include both school representation and the millennial voice in transportation planning. What began as an inquiry about school transportation and planning from a high school student has resulted in the School Transportation Working Group, an advisory group that has voting representation on the MPO board and represents the needs specific to the eighth largest school district in the country. The Working Group has been successful in advancing several initiatives that benefit school age users, including a safety video contest for students; selection of three Safe Routes To Schools (SRTS) projects in areas with higher crash vulnerability; a teen safety driving program (associated with a general downward trend in crashes among 15 to 19 year old drivers); and exceptional implementation of the Getting to School Survey, prompted by a reduction of non-qualifying bus services impacting 7500 students. The MPO’s efforts are not only introducing an entirely new group of users to transportation planning, but also producing measurable benefits for an often overlooked cross section of system users. Better still, the high school student that prompted it all has remained an active participant, and is now in college and serving on the CAC.
The MPO is increasingly a repository for vast amounts of community characteristics data, so copious that its use may present a challenge. One strategy the MPO has for using data is to verify that projects meet one of two critical categories: Safety and Access. Either the project will reduce crashes and save lives, or it will provide a real transportation choice for the community, such as gaining access to economic, health, retail or social services. Another common use of data is in layering demographics over lane miles, bus route miles, distances from transit and other similar mapping in the LRTP. Of course, project selection is only one aspect of transportation equity. Projects and activities must also be screened to ensure equitable distribution of project impacts, both positive and negative. To do so, the MPO is developing a Title VI Inclusivity Plan that will further define the area’s communities of concern and assist with project selection and evaluation.

Since the last certification, the MPO has taken strong steps in furthering pedestrian and bike accessibility. Partnering with the City-County Planning Commission, the MPO’s Health in All Policies initiative inventories sidewalks and other facilities to evaluate access to healthy food. It uses a geospatial tool called SUGAR Access that evaluates demographics in relation to essential services such as groceries or medical facilities. This approach helps prioritize pedestrian improvements, one of the essential elements of ADA Transition Planning. In addition, the MPO has reviewed its roadways countywide for level of pedestrian services. These are important efforts in that under 28 CFR 35.105, all public entities, including MPOs, are required to conduct a self-evaluation of programs and services for accessibility and where deficiencies are discovered, make necessary modifications for compliance. Although transition planning requirements under 28 CFR 35.150(d)(3) apply to those entities with control over pedestrian rights of way, MPOs share a common minimum obligation; to ensure that all planning products include accessibility considerations and to involve the community with disabilities and their service representatives in the planning process.

The MPO has a Title VI/Nondiscrimination and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan that was ostensibly reviewed during the last PPP update. While the MPO outlines some laudable nondiscrimination program goals, namely strengthening the connection between transportation and community health; expanding information resources and analysis techniques; and community cooperation in providing multimodal access to essential services, the Federal Review Team found some outdated and inconsistent nondiscrimination language. Further, the LEP Plan uses older demographic information and references the former Title VI Coordinator. Moreover, it discusses the LEP ‘safe harbor’ in a manner that suggests adoption by the MPO, though the only identified language is Spanish. To take advantage of the safe harbor affirmative defense, the MPO will have to translate all essential documents to any LEP language when the population reaches 1000 persons or 5%, whichever is less. This could be an expensive and even wasteful proposition when the MPO might meet the requirements through targeted programs and services. That said, the MPO provides its nondiscrimination information in hard copy at the MPO offices and via omnipresent links at the bottom of each webpage.
**Recommendation:** The Federal Review Team offers one recommendation related to Title VI and related requirements. For more details about these items, please see Section X.

**Section VI. Linking Planning and Environment (23CFR 450.318)**

MPO staff has been supporting the FDOT Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process by providing comments from both staff and citizens regarding projects going through the ETDM process. The MPO staff has been responsible for defining a project’s Purpose and Need as part of the LRTP development. In addition, the ETDM process was used to evaluate each of the projects within the LRTP.

The MPO consulted with state and local agencies/governments during the development of the LRTP. Each of the seven geographic FDOT Districts has an Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) that provided the MPO with input regarding projects’ potential effects on natural, cultural, physical, and community resources. During the Needs Assessment process, this information was used to conduct an evaluation of the potential impacts to wildlife, habitat, and wetlands, as well as an evaluation of the potential cost of environmental mitigation for each facility in the needs network.

According to the MPO’s LRTP, as projects move beyond the planning stage, specific environmental mitigation plans will be developed. Options typically include potential use of mitigation banking or on-site mitigation to restore, create, enhance and/or preserve the natural environment.

**Section VII. Long Range Transportation Plan (23 CFR 450.322)**

Hillsborough MPO adopted the Imagine 2040 LRTP on November 12, 2014. The LRTP 2040 Hillsborough MPO Plan was updated with the Comprehensive Plans of Hillsborough County, and the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City. These plans were jointly developed by Hillsborough MPO staff, Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission, local planning agencies and municipalities. The Imagine 2040 Plan is guided by goals, objectives, and policies in addition to collaboration with previous transportation plans and studies on a regional, state and local level that have been incorporated into the Plan. Prior to Imagine 2040, the MPO hosted workshops with questions to obtain input from the public about important measures, projects, modes of transportation and sustainability in transportation for the Hillsborough MPO area.

In the Imagine 2040 LRTP, the MPO has addressed the national goals as well as the Planning Factors from MAP-21. These principles of sustainable communities integrate transportation and land use planning by defining policies to make cities sustainable and accessible for citizens of all ages, economic income levels, and physical conditions. Also, see the bike/pedestrian section of the MPO planning process and how it relates to investment projects in relationship to the performance measures in the LRTP. The MPO coordinates with HART on updates to the Transit Development Plan, TBARTA on the regional transportation master plan, and the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority and
Tampa Port Authority on updates to their master plans. The MPO’s Imagine 2040 LRTP contains a specific goal to promote freight movement, and multimodal freight needs and considerations are interwoven throughout the goals for improving system continuity and connectivity, increasing safety for the system users and promoting multi-modal solutions.

Projects identified as needed or cost-feasible through the MPO’s partner agencies’ planning processes are included in the LRTP development for the purposes of technical analysis as well as public information and engagement. The LRTP is available on the MPO website and in the MPO office. Hard copies are available to the public upon request.

The Imagine 2040 Plan has been noted as a national best practice by FHWA for being developed using the principles of performance based planning through scenario planning. The plan has documented the performance of each growth scenario and measures the outcome. The MPO made a creative effort to develop the potential growth scenarios. While creating the Imagine 2040 Plan, the MPO sought out groups of area residents, students, business and civic leaders, retirees, and various professionals to assist them in the LRTP’s development. Three interactive workshops were held where citizens could provide their input. The work group and the MPO agreed that Bustling Metro, New Corporate Centers and Suburban Dream would be the growth scenarios the MPO would analyze for plan development. To get an idea of some of the performance measures that were developed from those scenarios, the MPO chose twelve performance measures for their plan development, including efficient energy use; job creation; shorter commutes and air pollution rate.

Transit performance measures have also been developed for the LRTP and have been developed for each investment level. The investment levels are high, medium and low. There are currently three performance measures dedicated to transit for the LRTP. Transit data from HART played a major role in performance measure development.

The MPO has a State of the System report which performs as an update to the Congestion Management and Crash Mitigation Process. The report identifies goals related to the condition of the transportation network and develops objective performance measures to establish benchmarks and track trends. The report also has a robust discussion on targets. The State of the System report is the MPO’s first attempt at trying to meet the future performance measure requirements. The MPO has ensured that the federal performance measures in the report are linked to the performance measures and other elements within the LRTP. There is also a discussion on Vision Zero, which is outlined further in the safety section of this report. The State of the System report for 2016 can be obtained from the MPO’s website.

Projects identified as needed or cost-feasible through the MPO’s partner agencies’ planning processes are included in the LRTP development for the purposes of technical analysis as well as public information and engagement. The LRTP is available on the
MPO website and in the MPO office. Hard copies are available to the public upon request.

The 2040 LRTP is data-driven and multimodal. The Hillsborough MPO provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate how each planning factor is being considered in the LRTP, and the goals and objectives of the LRTP are consistent with local comprehensive plans and the Federal planning requirements.

**Noteworthy Practice:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice pertaining to the LRTP. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

### A. Travel Demand Modeling/Data

The model used by the Hillsborough MPO in the transportation planning process is the District Seven Tampa Bay Regional Planning Model (TBRPM), which was developed in coordination with the other regional partners through the Technical Review Team (TRT) process. There is no formal agreement governing the TRT but decisions are made in consensus with the partners. The MPOs are responsible for travel forecasting, however FDOT operates the model on behalf of the Florida MPOs.

During the LRTP development and process, the MPO staff had direct and frequent contact with FDOT and the modeling consultant. The MPO staff participates in the District 7 Model coordination, and Technical Review Team meets monthly to ensure the consistency of model applications, model refinements, and future coordination among all participants’ meetings to receive the latest technical requirements for LRTP Development. The Members of MPO’s Forecasting and Multi-Modal Level of Service (MMLOS) Team are responsible for providing and reviewing both inputs/outputs to the regional travel model as well as in-county model runs and analysis.

### B. Financial Plan/Fiscal Constraint

The Financial Plan section of the LRTP includes detailed analyses of the availability of funding from Federal, State, and County sources. The 2040 Forecast of State and Federal Revenues for Statewide and Metropolitan Plans provided the state and federal allocations attributable to Hillsborough County. The traditional revenue sources and forecasted revenues anticipated for Hillsborough County were evaluated and assessed to develop the projected revenues through the year 2040. Consistent with Federal requirements, revenues are shown in Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars to reflect inflation. The FDOT Costing Tool was the primary source for development of the roadway project cost estimates. The current Hillsborough MPO 2040 LRTP is fiscally constrained.
Section VIII. Congestion Management Process (CMP) (23 CFR 450.320)

The Congestion Management and Crash Mitigation Process (CM/CMP) goals, objectives and performance measures for the MPO were reviewed in 2016. A few performance measures were added to better measure progress and address the worst congestion and crash areas. MPO staff will be tracking these new measures on an ongoing basis, along with the previous measures that they have been tracking for years. The CM/CMP is reviewed approximately every three years or at least with every LRTP update cycle. The MPO last updated the report in March 2016.

When the MPO last updated the CM/CMP performance report (2012), the MPO’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members were asked to serve on the steering committee. Invitations were also sent to law enforcement, the trucking industry, and others not represented on the TAC. The first hour of the TAC’s regular meeting was set aside as a special workshop to review the CM/CMP goals, performance measures, and strategies. This group’s input and support will continue to be crucial in implementing the recommendations.

The MPO’s congestion management techniques focus on reducing the impact on congested corridors by recommending the use of technology, as well as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and multi-modal strategies to maximize the effectiveness of the corridor of the transportation network’s ability to carry people and goods. The MPO supports the reduction of congestion by consistently supporting transit with an emphasis on vanpool (and carpool programs). Hillsborough MPO continues to be one of the few MPOs to allocate flexible funds to acquire transit and vanpool vehicles.

Noteworthy Practice: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice to the Congestion Management Process. For more details about this practice, please see Section X.

Section IX. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (23 CFR 450.324, 326, 328, 330, 332)

The Hillsborough MPO TIP serves as a five-year financially feasible program of improvements for all modes of travel within Hillsborough County, including sidewalks, transit improvements, bicycle facilities, and transportation enhancement activities to be funded by Title 23 USC and the Federal Transit Act.

The MPO coordinates closely with FDOT, HART, local jurisdictions and transportation authorities in preparing the TIP. FDOT develops project costs for each project, which are balanced against the budget of available revenues, then programs the selected federally and state funded projects via the Work Program. The MPO and HART also work closely with FDOT to identify, evaluate, prioritize and fund critical transit needs. Major projects from local jurisdictions and transportation authorities’ capital improvement programs are also included in the TIP.
Projects listed in the TIP are derived from a number of planning documents: the LRTP, local capital improvement elements/programs in local comprehensive plans, modal plans such as the Transit Development Plan, Congestion Management System Corridor Reports, and Bicycle, Pedestrian, Airport or Port Master Plans. The TIP also encompasses projects privately funded pursuant to development agreements.

The TIP demonstrates financial constraint by including a table summarizing the funding by Federal, State, and Local sources. This table sums all sources and compares them with the total cost of all projects in the FDOT work program. The balanced total costs and revenues are shown year by year on the bottom of Table 3 of the TIP.

The MPO utilizes an interactive Planning Information Map App Tool (PIMA) that is available to the public on the MPO’s website. PIMA can be used to search county and city maps, and currently has transportation, environmental, and land use data layers use to explore. A traffic count layer is also being developed. The tool enables users to search the maps, TIP, and plan amendments for information by project number, description, address or parcel.

**Noteworthy Practice and Recommendation:** The Federal Review Team recognizes two noteworthy practices and offers one recommendation pertaining to the Transportation Improvement Program. For more details about these items, please see Section X.

**Section X. Findings/Conclusions**

The following items represent a compilation of the findings that are included in this 2017 certification review report. These findings, which are identified as noteworthy practices, corrective actions, and recommendations, are intended to not only ensure continuing regulatory compliance of the Hillsborough MPO transportation planning process with federal planning requirements, but to also foster high-quality planning practices and improve the transportation planning program in this TMA. Corrective Actions reflect required actions for compliance with the Federal Planning Regulations and must be completed within the timeframes noted. Recommendations reflect national trends and best practices, and are intended to provide assistance to the MPO to improve the planning process. Noteworthy Practices highlight efforts that demonstrate innovative ideas for implementing the planning requirements.

At the conclusion of the Federal Review site visit, the Federal Review Team asked the MPO staff if they had any training or technical assistance needs. The Hillsborough MPO identified technical assistance requests for topical areas including ACV technology, public involvement, and express toll lanes reliability. FHWA and FTA will work with the MPO to provide resources in these areas.
A. Noteworthy Practices

1. **Safety Considerations in the Planning Process**: The MPO’s goal to create a Vision Zero plan for the region is commended. The MPO has diligently been working with stakeholders and the public to develop this plan. They have also looked towards social media to give the public updates on the plan’s development.

2. **Unified Planning Work Program**: The Hillsborough MPO UPWP highlights some unique activities for the MPO, such as the newly developed planning internship program in coordination with the University of South Florida (USF), which provides a few summer (undergraduate, based on project needs) and annual (one and two year graduate students) fellowship opportunities for students to obtain real world planning experience. An emphasis on planning from a health perspective is also evident with the Healthy Communities initiative and the development of a Health Impact Assessment, Hillsborough MPO Community Atlas Health and Transportation section, and research on health outcomes related to the implementation of complete streets plans.

3. **Outreach and Public Participation**: The Federal Review Team was impressed with the MPO’s actions in reserving committee seats for those in underrepresented demographics. This can be a difficult step for government entities, but a necessary affirmative measure in ensuring nondiscrimination and inclusion. The MPO’s process may provide solutions to other agencies that struggle to reach parity in public involvement.

4. **Long Range Transportation Plan**: The MPO developed a performance based scenario planning process for their 2040 Imagine LRTP with lots of public involvement and participation. The creation of growth scenarios and performance measures coming out of those scenarios are not only recognized by the Federal Review Team as a proactive, excellent example of effective performance based planning for the metropolitan planning process, but have also been recognized nationally by FHWA.

5. **Congestion Management Process**: With FHWA’s and FTA’s added emphasis on performance measures, we commend the Hillsborough MPO for embracing them as a method to measure the effectiveness of CM/CMP. The use of these measures to track efforts to utilize low cost system enhancements is a best practice in both the congestion and safety disciplines. The MPO has noted that a relatively few trouble spots are causing a majority of the crash and congestion issues, and addressing those areas is a most efficient use of scarce resources.

6. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**: The MPO is commended for the development and use of a Planning Information Map App (PIMA), a TIP mapping tool the public can use to search and access information related to the various project data layers available as well as the TIP and TIP amendments. This tool is
user-friendly, promoting and supporting transparency and open, easy access to information.

7. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** In coordination with the Florida Department of Health (DOH), the MPO has created a subject matter expert group consisting of representatives from DOH, the MPO, the University of South Florida, and Hillsborough MPO Aging Services to further the consideration of health impacts in relation to transportation planning and decision making. This group is currently developing a screening tool to examine TIP priority projects and make recommendations for their inclusion into the upcoming TIP. This approach is new to the planning process for the MPOs in Florida.

8. **TMA Regional Coordination:** The Federal Review Team commends the Tampa Bay TMA MPOs and their regional transportation partners for their many regional coordination efforts. The consensus of the Federal Review Team and the participants of the certification review site visits is that regional coordination for this area is very strong. Although not currently a requirement in federal law, coordinating regionally with their nearby transportation partners is advantageous for highly populated and congested areas such as the Tampa Bay TMA to identify economies of scale and opportunities to leverage resources and efforts to advance mutual transportation goals and objectives. As this area continues to grow, robust regional coordination will be critical to further developing and maintaining the interconnectedness of the transportation system for residents living in the Tampa Bay TMA and surrounding counties.

**B. Corrective Actions**

There were no corrective actions identified in this review.

**C. Recommendations**

1. **Intelligent Transportation System (ITS):** ITS creates various data streams that can be leveraged in the Planning Process. The MPO is very involved in the region’s ITS programs, but makes no mention of how ITS data can be collected and distributed to further enhance its travel monitoring, safety and other programs, and supplement traditional data collection methods that reflects real or near real time information. We understand that the MPO is working with a consultant to create a Data Business Plan for collecting, sharing, and analyzing real-time traffic data between multiple agency partners and has created a Regional Data Working Group due to interest in this topic. The Federal Review Team recommends that the Hillsborough MPO continue to consider and pursue the creation of a program to leverage ITS data to further enhance its data programs.
2. Intelligent Transportation System (ITS): ITS creates various data streams that can be leveraged in the Planning Process. The MPO is very involved in the region’s ITS programs, but makes no mention of how ITS data can be collected and distributed to further enhance its travel monitoring, safety and other programs, and supplement traditional data collection methods that reflects real or near real time information. We understand that the MPO is working with a consultant to create a Data Business Plan for collecting, sharing, and analyzing real-time traffic data between multiple agency partners and has created a Regional Data Working Group due to interest in this topic. The Federal Review Team recommends that the Hillsborough MPO continue to consider and pursue the creation of a program to leverage ITS data to further enhance its data programs.

3. Outreach and Public Participation: The Federal Review Team observed that the MPO appears to use the terms “public meeting” and “public hearing” interchangeably. From a federal perspective, these terms are very different. A public hearing must meet specific and more stringent requirements spelled out in law that may not apply to a public meeting. Federal law does not require the conducting of public hearings for planning activities. However, state law may dictate otherwise. Therefore, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO review and evaluate their processes and procedures to determine if a public hearing or public meeting is required/appropriate and revise language in their planning documents to reflect the interaction accordingly.

4. Public Participation Plan (PPP): A large and comprehensive document, the MPO’s PPP appears to meet regulatory requirements, and it is regularly updated and evaluated for effectiveness. There is discussion in the TIP that refers to the PPP for the TIP amendment process. We recommend that a link to the PPP also be provided in the TIP and the same cross reference format be considered in other MPO documents where appropriate. However, the Federal Review Team suggests the following:

   a. Consider providing the copious planning acronym list in a searchable format. A tool whereby the public can enter an acronym and receive a definition and summary information would be a value-added benefit to the website instead of a long list appended to the PPP.

   b. The MPO should make sure to include Title VI and LEP, two planning essentials that are conspicuously missing from the MPO’s comprehensive acronym list.

   c. The MPO should include a distinct section on how the PPP was developed in consultation with all parties. This description is not limited to just review and commentary, but the MPO should document and describe the process by which the public, MPO partners and stakeholders helped to develop the PPP.
5. **Title VI and Related Requirements:**
   a. FHWA and FDOT have updated the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Sub-recipient Assurance which includes expanded contract clauses that the MPO must insert and require its contractors to inset into all of contract instruments. Moreover, for consultant contracts, the MPO must also ensure that contracts include DBE Assurance Language. The MPO should carefully review its procurement and contract documents, verifying that the correct nondiscrimination information is present and up to date.
   b. The MPO should update its Title VI/Nondiscrimination and LEP plan, ensuring the use of the most recent available demographics; identification of the correct Title VI Program Coordinator; and that its LEP plan lists reasonable steps for meaningful access. After doing so, the MPO can either continue reviewing and updating the program plan in conjunction with its PPP, or else do so triennially.
   c. In previous years, FHWA required annual review and update of recipient and sub-recipient nondiscrimination documents. FHWA is now aligned with FTA in permitting TMAs to complete these updates every three years. The MPO should undertake a program review this year to update nondiscrimination information and correct any errors or inconsistencies. It should also complete its Title VI Inclusivity Plan and, if necessary, execute a new (Title VI/Nondiscrimination Sub-recipient Assurance).

6. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):**
   a. Although it is noted in a few places in the narrative that project costs and revenues are shown in year of expenditure (YOE) dollars, there is no footnote/notation on the tables provided later in the document that indicates this fact. The Federal Review Team recommends that a notation be added to the appropriate tables in the TIP document to clarify that YOE dollars are being shown.
   b. There is also discussion in the TIP that refers to the PPP for the TIP amendment process. We recommend that a link to the PPP also be provided in the TIP and the same cross reference format be considered in other MPO documents where appropriate.
   c. The discussion regarding TIP amendments includes a breakdown of types of amendments into major and minor. This further breakdown seems confusing to the review team and would likely seem so to the public. Consideration should be given to determining whether this breakdown is needed/necessary or if other means or terminology would be more appropriate. From a federal perspective, an amendment has a defined meaning in regulation. Modification is also a frequently used term. The MPO is not precluded from specifying other terminology as part of their public involvement processes for TIP development and TIP amendments, but they should be clear and easily understandable to the public. The Federal Review Team recommends that the development of more definitive thresholds or criteria be considered to illustrate the parameters and elements that would determine a minor or major amendment.
Based on the overall findings, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the Tampa Bay Area TMA, which is comprised in part by the Hillsborough MPO, substantially meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. This certification will remain in effect until June 2021.

Part II: Forward Pinellas

Section I. Previous Certification Findings Status/Update

The following is a summary of the previous recommendations made by the Federal Review Team to Forward Pinellas in 2013. There were no Corrective Actions identified for Forward Pinellas in the prior report.

A. Recommendations:

1. **Agreements:** The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO re-visit and revise, where necessary, the 2004 Interlocal agreement and at a minimum provide an updated date of the most recent review of the agreement.

   **Update:** The MPO’s Interlocal agreements were updated October 15, 2014 and substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314.

2. **Transit (List of Obligated Projects):** The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO staff coordinate with FDOT and public transportation operator(s) to ensure that transit projects are included in the Annual List of Obligated projects for the next update.

   **Update:** The MPO coordinated with FDOT and public transportation operators and provided an Annual List of Obligated projects November 9, 2016 that substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.332.

3. **Public Participation Plan:** The Forward Pinellas PPP does not reflect all the MPO’s current programs, services and activities. While the MPO’s website is a useful tool for advising the public on many of the MPO’s public engagement activities, there is not enough explicit information provided in the MPO’s Public Participation Plan. The MPO should carefully examine this document to ensure that, at a minimum, it contains all the requisite information from 23 CFR 450.316, and that the plan is a useful roadmap for advising the public of its services. The Federal Review Team strongly recommends that in the next update of the Public Participation Plan, MPO staff give careful consideration to conveying information related to thoroughly engaging the public in the planning process. Attention should be given to clarifying how, when and where committees meet, how a member of the public can serve on committee, and how the public can get involved in the development of the public participation plan and other MPO planning products. The PPP should also include information on the amendment process for the MPO planning products, including the time frame for review and
how public comments will be received and addressed. Consideration should also be given to using visualization techniques to enhance the readability of the plan. Lastly, the plan should reflect the vibrancy of the MPO’s efforts as detailed by the MPO during the certification review site visit discussions.

**Update:** The MPO updated the PPP on July 13, 2016, to satisfy federal requirements as outlined in § 450.316 that address the planning process and how, when, and where the committees meet and how the public can get engaged in the development of Public Participation Plan and other MPO planning products (TIP, LRTP, CMP, and UPWP). The PPP includes information on the amendment process for the MPO planning products, a time frame for review, and how public comments will be received and addressed. The MPO provided the use of updated visualization techniques that enhance the readability of the plan, and on June 8, 2016, the MPO approved an amendment to the CAC bylaws establishing an application process for the appointment of new Committee members. See this link: [http://forwardpinellas.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/PPP.pdf](http://forwardpinellas.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/PPP.pdf)

4. **Public Participation Plan (Measures of Effectiveness):** In accordance with 23 CFR § 450.316(a)(1)(x), the Forward Pinellas County MPO needs to develop a plan which more adequately measures the effectiveness of the strategies contained in their PPP. This document should not only outline the techniques used but should also document the effectiveness of strategies used from year to year. While the MPO has made significant progress related to Measures of Effectiveness there still appears to be some apprehension related to how to measure specific techniques outlined in the Public Participation Plan, as indicated by the number of techniques that do not have a measure assigned to it in the measures of effectiveness report. The Federal Review Team remains available to assist the MPO is developing measures for the techniques outlined in their current Public Participation Plan as well as providing feedback for any future updates.

**Update:** In 2015, the MPO conducted an evaluation of the effectiveness of MPO public participation strategies and evaluation. The MPO updated the PPP on July 13, 2016, as a result of the evaluation. Also, the MPO is in the process of developing a public awareness strategy to align with transportation and land use functions within the agency.

5. **Public Participation (Citizen’s Advisory Committee):** In the previous certification review the Federal Review Team recommended the MPO staff continue their efforts to achieve citizen representation on the MPO’s advisory committees that reflects the composition of Pinellas County. While the Federal Review Team acknowledges the effort of the MPO staff in achieving this goal, due to significant growth in the Hispanic population, the Federal Review Team encourages staff to continue actively seeking Hispanic representation on the Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC).
**Update**: The MPO added one Hispanic member to the CCC. The MPO also developed an application process for the appointment of new members in 2016 that will assist in identifying the national origin in accordance with bylaws of the agency and Title VI Plan.


6. **Title VI (Nondiscrimination Program):** Forward Pinellas annually reviews its Title VI/Nondiscrimination Program documents for sufficiency and to ensure nondiscrimination in its programs, services and activities in compliance with 23 CFR 200.9(b)(5) and (6). The MPO will shortly undertake its review of the program for 2013. As it does so, FHWA recommends that the MPO ensure that its program documents contain:

   a. The name and contact information for the employee designated the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator. At a minimum, the employee should be listed by name on Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy.
   b. An organization chart that shows direct, dotted line access from the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator to the Executive Director of the MPO.
   c. Consistent use of correct nondiscrimination language and the protected classes wherever the MPO references nondiscrimination. The MPO may wish to consider developing a standard nondiscrimination statement that contains a link to the full policy and complaint filing procedure. The MPO may then ensure optimum access by placing the language and link on all documents meant for the public.

**Update**: The MPO website has addressed name and contact information for Title VI Specialist/Coordinator.


An organization chart has been updated to reflect the direct line from the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator to the MPO Executive Director see the attached link below:


The MPO has consistent, correct language and protected classes referenced wherever nondiscrimination is referenced. Also, the MPO website includes the contact information on all MPO committee agendas, publications for LRTP, TIP, and UPWP.

http://forwardpinellas.org/get-involved/nondiscrimination-information

7. **Title VI (Nondiscrimination Program):** Forward Pinellas has placed a direct link to its Title VI and DBE information on the homepage of its website. This is a strong practice that shows clear commitment to the program. However, ‘Title VI’ is not readily identifiable to the public and DBE information, while important, may not be of much interest to most visitors. The MPO may wish to consider changing the link to ‘Nondiscrimination Information’ which takes the user to a list of clearly labeled documents, including its Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan, complaint forms, assurances, etc. Ideally, the page should describe the MPO’s
nondiscrimination policy and provide the name and contact information of the Nondiscrimination Coordinator. Note, 23 CFR 200.9(b) (12) requires nondiscrimination information to be translated into alternate languages, as appropriate. Thus, the MPO should consider offering all its nondiscrimination documents in Spanish.

**Update:** The MPO updated the heading link to ‘Nondiscrimination Information’ that directs the user to a list of clearly labeled documents, including its Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan, complaint forms, assurances, and the Nondiscrimination documents are translated into Spanish. [http://forwardpinellas.org/get-involved/nondiscrimination-information/](http://forwardpinellas.org/get-involved/nondiscrimination-information/)

8. **Environmental Coordination:** The planning regulations require that long-range transportation plans be developed in "consultation" with State, tribal, and local agencies responsible for: Land Use Management; Natural Resources; Environmental Protection; Conservation; and Historic Preservation. The term, “consultation” as defined by 23 CFR 450.322(g) involves the comparison of transportation plans to State and Tribal conservation plans or maps, if available, and the comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources if available. The federal review team recommends that the MPO expands its current efforts of consultation to include the comparing and the consideration of plans of various resource agencies, while fully involving them in the development of the next LRTP update.

**Update:** The LRTP includes a discussion of the MPO’s environmental coordination efforts. They worked closely with PSTA, FDOT, Technical Coordinating Committee, other stakeholders, Southwest Florida Water Management District, and local government agencies during the development of the LRTP.

9. **Transportation Improvement Program:** The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO include information in the executive summary of the TIP, which details for the public the procedures for revisions, amendments and administrative modifications, actions or adjustments made to the TIP, in accordance with CFR 450.326. The MPO is encouraged to coordinate and align the inclusion of this information with information included in the public participation plan. Providing this information in the executive summary of this planning document ensures that a member of the public is fully aware of the amendment/modification process without having to refer to another document to get the information.
Update: The MPO TIP was adopted June 8, 2016, and amended November 9, 2016, and included information in the executive summary of the TIP, which details for the public the procedures for revisions, amendments and administrative modifications, actions or adjustments made to the TIP, in accordance with CFR 450.326. http://forwardpinellas.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/TIP1617.pdf

Section II. Boundaries and Organization (23 CFR 450.310, 312, 314)

A. Description of Planning Area

Pinellas County is located on Florida’s central west coast, and at 280 square miles, is the smallest of the three counties of the Tampa-St. Petersburg urbanized area. It is a peninsula county bounded by Pasco County to the north, Hillsborough County and Tampa Bay to the east, the Gulf of Mexico on the west and Tampa Bay to the south. In 2010, Pinellas County’s population was 916,542, and has since experienced a significant growth in the Hispanic population.

Pinellas County shares three major bridge connections that are located to the east with Hillsborough County, and four major roadway connections to the north with Pasco County. Over the last decade, the countywide population has been relatively flat as the county is 95% “built out,” which means there is limited vacant developable land.

B. Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure

Forward Pinellas Board is comprised of 13 voting members representing 25 local governments and Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA). The voting structure is one vote per member. The voting members are: County Commissioners (3), City of St. Petersburg (central city) (2), City of Clearwater (1), City of Largo (1), City of Pinellas Park (1), City of Dunedin (1), the Cities of Oldsmar, Safety Harbor & Tarpon Springs (1) (shared seat rotated every 2 years), the Cities of Belleair, Belleair Bluffs, Gulfport, Kenneth City, Seminole and South Pasadena (one shared seat rotated biennially), Indian Rocks Beach (1), Belleair Beach, Belleair Shore, Indian Rocks Beach, Indian...
Shores, Madeira Beach, North Redington Beach, Redington Beach, Redington Shores, Treasure Island and St. Pete Beach (shares one seat rotated periodically pursuant to the agreement among the ten local governments). The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) is the primary provider of transit services.

The MPO regulatory process for coordinating transportation and land use decisions in Pinellas County was enhanced in 2014 by establishing common board membership for both Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) and Forward Pinellas while remaining two separate legal entities. The primary responsibility of the MPO is to develop plans, policies and priorities that guide local decision making on transportation issues. This team compliments each other well, and provided a wealth of information that was extremely helpful for this review.

Forward Pinellas has several standing committees including: The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC), Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), Local Coordinating Board (LCB), School Transportation Safety Committee (STSC), Transportation Mobility Management Advisory Committee (TMMAC), and Pinellas Trail Security Task Force (PTSTF).

C. Agreements

The MPO’s agreements were updated December 10, 2014, and substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314 (a).

Section III. Scope of the Planning Process (23 CFR 450.306)

A. Transportation Planning Factors

23 CFR 450.306 requires that the metropolitan transportation planning process explicitly consider and analyze several planning factors that reflect sound planning principles. Forward Pinellas addresses the required planning factors throughout the planning process and in the development of transportation planning products such as the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP. The planning factors are incorporated into the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the LRTP.

B. Air Quality

The Forward Pinellas is currently designated as an attainment area for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). However, the MPO seeks out and attends courses related to Air Quality and Climate Change when available.
C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Activities

The Forward Pinellas transportation planning process seeks to accommodate the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians by working with various stakeholder groups and partner agencies to identify and provide a robust network of trails, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks. The primary bicycle and pedestrian stakeholder group is the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). The BPAC also provides input on roadway design plans, proposed intersection improvements, and bridge replacement studies to ensure the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians are addressed. Forward Pinellas, the Pasco County MPO and the Hillsborough MPO all participate in the new regional Tri County Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

Forward Pinellas updated its Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in 2013. This update involved a comprehensive assessment of planned bicycle lanes and shared use paths. The primary objective of this effort was to improve connectivity and provide safer travel conditions between existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities and major trip destinations. Forward Pinellas also published the very popular Discover Pinellas bicycle and pedestrian guide and map, which includes destination information and safety tips. Approximately 35,000 copies of the map were published and distributed within two months and additional maps had to be published.

Forward Pinellas has partnered with the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County to utilize grant funds for projects that increase access to physical activity. These projects included developing educational materials focused on safe walking and biking practices, implementing a demonstration bicycle and pedestrian wayfinding program for six county parks, installing bicycle repair stations along the Pinellas Trail, and expanding the use of automated trail counters. The Forward Pinellas and Health Department partnership activity on the Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH) program was highlighted by FHWA on their “Health in Transportation” webpage in June 2016.

Other types of bicycle, pedestrian, and trail projects have been and continue to be funded using various local, State, and Federal sources including Transportation Alternatives, transportation impact fees, the Penny for Pinellas infrastructure sales tax, and the Shared Use Non-Motorized Trail (SUNTrail) Program.

Noteworthy Practice: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice pertaining to the Bike and Pedestrian Planning Activities. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

D. Transit

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) is the transit provider in Pinellas County. PSTA operates 160 fixed route buses and 2 commuter routes. PSTA provides ADA Paratransit service through Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART). According to the National Transit Database (2014), PSTA provides over 14.5 million transit trips annually and reports that its weekday ridership is growing, with approximately 46,567 riders per weekday; 29,568 on Saturdays and 16,005 on Sundays.
PSTA serves on the Forward Pinellas board and several advisory committees (Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Technical Advisors to the Local Coordinating Board and the Technical Coordinating Committee). PSTA is closely involved in the MPO planning process with the development of LRTP, TIP, and UPWP and through the various subcommittees. According to the MPO, a major transit initiative (a.k.a., Greenlight Pinellas) calling for light rail and a substantially expanded bus system was the centerpiece of the draft 2040 LRTP before the Greenlight Pinellas referendum was denied by the voters in November, 2014. The above working relationships have established a high level of cooperation between PSTA and the MPO in the transportation planning process for the metropolitan area.

It is a common practice for PSTA and the MPO to coordinate on various major planning studies. A few of the studies include: premium transit service planning, the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit, Tampa International Airport to Clearwater Beach and downtown St. Petersburg to downtown Tampa services. The MPO also coordinated with PSTA in a Transit Suitability Analysis. Through the Local Coordinating Board, Forward Pinellas also has worked with PSTA to support transit use as an integral part of the Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

The MPO is the sub-recipient of FTA Section 5305(d) Statewide and Metropolitan Planning program funding awarded and passed through from FDOT. The FTA Apportionment for Section 5307 Urbanized Area formula funds is provided to the Tampa-St. Petersburg UZA, which includes HART, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), Pasco County Public Transit (PCPT) and the Tampa Bay Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA). HART, PSTA and PCPT are all FTA designated recipients. There is a funding split agreement in place that is applied to the UZA Apportionment to divide the funding between each transit agency. The split agreement is provided to FTA annually. After the funds are divided, each transit agency submits an application to FTA for the Section 5307 funds. Since 2013, TBARTA is also included in the annual split of 5307 funds as a Direct Recipient. Transit funding is also provided to PSTA by FDOT and the MPO is also a direct recipient of FTA funds.

**E. Intelligent Transportation Systems**

The regional ITS architecture is being used to guide the deployment of a countywide Advance Traffic Management System (ATMS) and related ITS strategies.

ITS activities in the MPO/TMA are coordinated at the local level, through the Forward Pinellas Transportation Mobility Management Advisory Committee (TMMAC, replaced the ITS committee) and through the mechanisms outlined in the 2001 ITS/ATMS Master Plan for Pinellas County. All ITS/ATMS master plan projects will be completed by 2018. At the regional level, coordination occurs through the TBARTA MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC). A formalized regional ITS committee is currently being established to enhance coordination in the TMA and the larger region. The MPO partners with FDOT, and other local government entities in traffic monitoring programs.
following the Traffic Monitoring Guide (TMG) and uses Linear Referencing Systems (LRS) and other modern geospatial techniques such as Bluetooth monitoring.

**Recommendation:** The Federal Review Team offers one recommendation pertaining to ITS. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

### F. Freight Planning

The MPO coordinates closely with the Florida Department of Transportation and local agencies to identify the transportation needs of freight providers. Forward Pinellas has been working with freight stakeholders through the Regional Goods Movement Advisory Committee (GMAC). The GMAC guides and informs the strategic freight planning process in the Tampa Bay Region. This committee includes representation from transportation and land use planning agencies, intermodal entities, economic development groups, and the trucking industry.

The 2040 LRTP contains a specific goal to promote freight movement, and multimodal freight needs and considerations are interwoven throughout the goals for improving system continuity and connectivity, increasing safety for the system users and promoting multi-modal solutions. The LRTP identified the freight activity centers, corridors, and distribution routes within the MPO area. The LRTP also used the results of an analysis – which identified freight flows, the routes various freight providers used, and freight concerns and potential improvements – to develop the Cost Feasible Plan.

### G. Security Considerations in the Planning Process

The MPO’s 2040 LRTP contains a safety goal that includes increasing the security of the transportation system for its users. This security element also incorporates the goals from the local transit provider’s safety and security planning review process, plans and programs. Security considerations were used in the development of the 2040 LRTP and a UPWP task identifies activities to test and evaluate the MPO’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). The MPO’s COOP is consistent with Pinellas County’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and was updated in March 2017. A test of the COOP was also conducted at that time during a staff meeting.

Security is listed as an explicit goal in the MPO’s LRTP. Throughout the planning process and in developing the priorities for the LRTP, the MPO considers all critical facilities to the local, regional, and state transportation system. In addition to the Interstate and the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) system, the MPO focuses on Evacuation Routes, and critical infrastructure needs.
H. Safety Considerations in the Planning Process

Forward Pinellas has an extensive safety element in their 2040 LRTP and is consistent with Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Forward Pinellas also includes goals, objectives and policies that are consistent with, and supportive of, the SHSP. The MPO is committed to working with local governments to develop and implement safety strategies as part of their transportation planning process. For the 2035 LRTP, the MPO created a Project Safety Checklist. The checklist is used as an assessment tool for project review stages for local jurisdictions and transportation agencies to include safety early in the process of development. The checklist includes three (3) stages overall: preview considerations; implementation and post construction review of traffic plans; and performance measures.

There are numerous committees the MPO has created to assist staff in safety planning. One such committee is the School Transportation Safety Committee (STSC). The STSC is made up of local elected officials and school board members that meet to address school-related transportation access and safety issues. The STSC aims to improve communication and coordination between transportation agencies and the Pinellas County School Board. (http://forwardpinellas.org/about-us/advisory-committees/school-transportation-safety-committee-stsc/)

The MPO has also been working with FDOT, Pinellas County and the Pinellas Sheriff’s Office bicyclists and pedestrian safety initiatives. They also participate in an annual Safety Summit to discuss safety topics, and an MPO board member participated as a guest speaker for the Safety Summit last year.

In addition, associated webinars and sessions are held throughout the year at the FDOT District 7 office. In 2016, the MPO developed the Traffic Crash Trends and Conditions report. The report summarizes the crashes, injuries, and deaths that occurred on Pinellas County roadways during the 2015 calendar year. Data was obtained from several sources including the Pinellas County Crash Data Management System (CDMS), Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FDHSMV), Florida’s Integrated Report Exchange System (FIRES), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and other traffic crash data repositories. In most instances, 2015 data was utilized. However, in other cases, the latest available data is from 2014 and is so noted throughout the report. The report is very concise and easy for readers to review. The MPO plans to update this report in the near future.
Section IV. Unified Planning Work Program (23 CFR 450.308)

Forward Pinellas adopted their most recent UPWP in May 2016. The Forward Pinellas FY 2016/17 – 2017/18 UPWP covers transportation planning activities/products for two fiscal years and contains sufficient description of the costs and activities the MPO plans to complete.

In the development of the UPWP, Federal Funds and anticipated expenditures are clearly identified through an interactive process that involves staff, the public transportation agency, advisory committees and the Forward Pinellas Board, as well as FDOT, FHWA and FTA. Forward Pinellas also reaches out to local government staff for input into the UPWP on their transportation planning projects, including those that may involve local funding. Additionally, FDOT provides input on their priorities and planning projects, as well as guidance regarding potential changes to the UPWP. Forward Pinellas works with the transit authority during the development of the UPWP draft to identify transit planning tasks and the allocation of associated funding for the next two budget years.

Forward Pinellas also works closely with neighboring MPOs to identify and develop regional tasks for the UPWP. This coordination supports consistent reporting in the respective MPO UPWPs to ensure that regional coordination continues to occur. In preparation of the quarterly billing submittals for each of the grants (e.g., FTA 5305, FHWA PL, FHWA STP, Florida TD Trust Fund), all professional service scopes of work are approved by the MPO Board and payments are approved by the Executive Director for the quarter assigned to the appropriate UPWP task and grant. As funds are expended, they are identified in the grant invoice submittals prepared for FDOT review on a quarterly basis. Internal reviews by staff are conducted on the invoices prior to Executive Director review/approval and submittal to FDOT.

As part of this certification, the Federal Review Team conducted a financial review of Forward Pinellas. The primary objective of this financial review was to establish the level of reliability, effectiveness, and compliance with Federal requirements that can be placed on the MPO’s internal controls in order to review, analyze, and submit reimbursement for federal funds. Primary emphasis was placed on determining the adequacy and completeness of management internal controls, documentation, and standard operating procedures.

The MPO has procedures that address timekeeping in maintaining adequate audit records to support compensation, approvals to timesheets, and quality control. Their Internal Control Structure Policy Manual provides an overview of internal control procedures that ensure a control environment, risk assessment, control activities, communication, and monitoring. The general guidelines are consistent with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) Green Book, and monthly financial reports are reviewed and approved by the Board. Payroll processing is submitted through Oracle Project Unified Solutions which provides for separation of duties, approvals, and transparency for data. The Executive Director of the MPO is authorized to make budget
line item transfers, but there is a dollar amount threshold that requires Board oversight and approval. Furthermore, there are appropriate purchasing requirements and procedures that identify approval limits and separation of duties.

The results of the financial review disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other findings that are required to be reported under FHWA standards or policies. Furthermore, the Federal Review Team has reasonable assurance that Forward Pinellas’ financial processes and internal controls are compliant with applicable laws, regulations, policies and agreements to ensure general financial integrity.

Section V. Interested Parties (23 CFR 450 316)

A. Outreach and Public Participation

Forward Pinellas continues to be a role model for planning organizations nationally, particularly with regard to public involvement. Last year, the MPO filed a symbolic name application officially rebranding the MPO as ‘Forward Pinellas’ to better distinguish it from Pinellas County government as whole. At the same time, it is the first Florida MPO to combine governing boards so that land use and transportation planning decisions are consolidated under one board. A four-year effort, the result is an integrated, largely seamless organization that brings public focus not just to transportation, but to how it will serve the largely built-out area. As the MPO says, “while merging agendas and meetings took some time, now there is a unified agenda, and everyone is hearing how land use relates to transportation and transit choices.”

Not surprisingly, merging and rebranding the MPO required exhaustive public outreach, something that the MPO achieved through expanded use of electronic tools. In addition to a new logo, Forward Pinellas has an excellent website that couples visual interest with clean, uncluttered fields. Visitors can navigate the site by clicking icons to get involved, shape the future or learn more about the area’s transportation systems, to name a few. The site also contains blogs that offer a variety of topics from complete streets projects to economic development through the growth of microbreweries. Better yet, each blog is archived so that the public can access discussion topics dating to as early September 2015. Other links advise visitors of how to serve on advisory committees, attend a board or committee meeting, request MPO presentations or join the universal mailing list.

The MPO has also increased its use of social media, even seeking out a new provider when the engine for TellUsPinellas discontinued collection of essential data. The MPO relies on origination and other information from those accessing TellUsPinellas and its other media tools to not only measure the effectiveness of this aspect of public involvement, but to get a better idea of where public interest lies. Thus, in its 2015 evaluation, the MPO concluded that board and committee information received twice as many hits as did the actual planning products and five times as many as the Title VI/Nondiscrimination links. For PDF hits, the bike/ped master plan and related hits far outweighed public visits to other documents like the LRTP, traffic counts or even safety brochures. The MPO reported similar breakdowns for Facebook and Twitter use. The
MPO has also laid a foundation for further social media use through an MPO-specific social media policy that describes requirements and prohibitions without quashing its usefulness.

One attendee at the certification public meeting noted that social media tools limit the scope and breadth of information and can give the public an incomplete picture of important topics. The MPO appears to understand this and does not limit public involvement to smart tools. Print media, Pinellas County Community Television, ETown Hall Meetings, surveys, focus groups, charrettes and community events are all MPO tools frequently used to enhance and expand public involvement. For example, the MPO recently conducted ‘Spotlight listening sessions’ at various locations, including at one of the beach communities. Two of the sessions were well attended with useful public input, but one was not. Thus, the MPO learned that this method is less effective in the business communities along US 19, but successful in locations frequented by the public for leisure activities.

Finally, the MPO further ensures participation by minority and low income populations by partnering with health care and social service agencies, including community representatives on focus groups and other committees, and holding or attending outreach events in targeted communities. As with all MPOs, Forward Pinellas struggles with demographic representation on its advisory committees. To address this problem, the MPO created a committee application and changed the bylaws to allow the MPO to consider race, ethnicity, age, income and other factors when trying to fill open positions. The process has resulted in the addition of Hispanic representation to the CAC and a waiting list of applicants that wish to serve.

**Noteworthy Practices and Recommendations:** The Federal Review Team recognizes two noteworthy practices and offers two recommendations pertaining to outreach and public participation. For more details about these items, please see Section X.

**B. Tribal Coordination**

There are no federally recognized tribes located in this area that require formal coordination with the MPO.

**C. Title VI and Related Requirements**

Each of Florida’s MPOs continues to make meaningful nondiscrimination efforts in planning products and other services, and Forward Pinellas is no exception. What sets this MPO apart is its willingness to discard methods that are unsuccessful in favor of those providing more useful data. For example, for the 2035 LRTP, the MPO ranked projects including point scores for those that benefited an environmental justice (EJ) or underserved community. However, the MPO believed that this method reduced benefits and burdens analysis to a matter of number of projects, oversimplifying the analysis and without taking into account expenditures. Thus, while the MPO still assists its local agencies with project ranking using protected class data, for its 2040 LRTP, the MPO layered expenditures over its community characteristics inventory maps, allowing
analysis of funding equity. The MPO then charted expenditures, showing in many cases that underserved areas were receiving a higher proportion of funding based on need. This is the essence of service equity. Nor is the LRTP the only product that includes an evaluation for nondiscrimination. The MPO also layers community characteristics data over transit routes, bike/ped maps, and any service or activity that tends to provide a clearer picture of the facilities and who uses them. It is this methodology that is in part leading the MPO away from more traditional Level of Service models to those that focus more on use and accessibility. Further, the MPO’s integration of land use and transportation planning is giving the MPO a broader perspective on community needs, particularly those of vulnerable communities. Issues like health care, emergency services, affordable housing, redevelopment and accessibility are juxtaposed with transportation planning, something that should result in stronger planning products with greater equity and diversity. More tools are now available from USDOT and FHWA for conducting equity analyses that should assist the MPO as it explores the best methods of ensuring nondiscrimination and service equity.

Pinellas County has a higher percentage of elderly residents than do Hillsborough and Pasco counties, meaning that accessibility along pedestrian rights of way is an important part of the MPO’s bicycle pedestrian planning. In addition to integrating accessibility as part of its project priorities, the MPO has taken other steps to ensure that the needs of those with disabilities are considered. For example, after much consultation with board members, the MPO adopted a multimodal priority list independent of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) list. The theory was that projects impacting safety, connectivity and accessibility system-wide should be considered a major project priority. Another example is the MPO’s approach to complete streets. Rather than focusing on policy adoption, the MPO funneled money into those listed priority projects that furthered complete streets objectives. Finally, in consideration of waterborne transportation, the MPO held a technical forum of operators and partner agencies, at which a primary discussion topic was the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The MPO has a Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan that was approved by FTA on May 19, 2016. It is sufficiently broad enough to meet minimum legal requirements, but mirrors heavily toward the FTA circular, sometimes narrowing the scope of nondiscrimination coverage to less than that demanded by FDOT and FHWA, potentially creating consistency issues in standard public nondiscrimination language. Similarly, the MPO adopts the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) ‘safe harbor’ affirmative defense, ostensibly because US DOT has done so. However, this adoption means that the MPO will have to translate all essential documents to any LEP language when the population reaches 1000 persons or 5%, whichever is less. This requirement could be an expensive and even wasteful proposition when the MPO might meet the requirements through targeted programs and services. That said, the MPO provides its nondiscrimination information in hard copy at the MPO offices and via an excellent and easy to locate webpage.
In previous years, FHWA required an annual review and update of recipient and sub-recipient nondiscrimination documents. Now, FHWA is aligned with FTA in permitting TMAs to complete these updates every three years. This change means that the MPO will need to: 1) conduct its nondiscrimination program review and update by May 2019, including executing a new Title VI/Nondiscrimination Sub-recipient Assurance; 2) review and, if necessary again update, demographic data for its Community Characteristics Inventory and LEP Plan; and 3) ensure that nondiscrimination and Title VI contact information is broadly disseminated and in languages other than English, if appropriate.

**Noteworthy Practice and Recommendations:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice and offers two recommendations related to Title VI and related requirements. For more details about these items, please see Section X.

**Section VI. Linking Planning and Environment (23CFR 450.318)**

Forward Pinellas staff support the Florida Department of Transportation’s (FDOT) Efficient Transportation Demand Management (ETDM) program by providing comments from both staff and citizens regarding projects going through the ETDM process. The MPO staff is responsible for defining a project’s Purpose and Need as part of the LRTP development. In addition, the ETDM process was used to evaluate each of the projects within the LRTP.

The MPO consulted state and local agencies/governments during the development of the LRTP. During the development of the 2040 Plan, staff met with environmental experts at the Southwest Florida Water Management District and LRTP Working group, which provided the MPO with some information related to wetland and seagrass impacts in relation to transportation projects. During the Needs Assessment process, this information was used to conduct an evaluation of the potential impacts to wildlife habitat, and wetlands, as well as an evaluation of the potential cost of environmental mitigation for each facility in the needs network.

According, to the MPO’s LRTP, as projects move beyond the planning stage, specific environmental mitigation plans will be developed. Options typically include potential use of mitigation banking or on-site mitigation to restore, create, enhance and/or preserve the natural environment.

**Section VII. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) (23 CFR 450.322)**

Forward Pinellas adopted the 2040 LRTP on December 10, 2014. The plan was developed by the MPO in collaboration with FDOT, PSTA, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA), committees of the MPO and adjacent MPOs to address major transportation issues affecting the region. An LRTP Working Group comprised of City and County departments and environmental and community groups was created specifically to assist in the technical development of the LRTP plan that reached more than 12,000 people over two years at more than 120 public engagements. These public engagements addressed key areas of transportation,
scenario planning and funding transportation projects through focus groups and workshops, stakeholder interviews, innovative techniques such as eTownHall meetings and virtual online forums, TellUsPinellas, Design Charrettes and other public involvement activities. The LRTP is available on the MPO website and in the MPO office. Hard copies are available to the public upon request.

The 2040 LRTP is data-driven and multimodal. Forward Pinellas provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate how each planning factor is being considered in the LRTP, and the goals and objectives of the LRTP are consistent with local comprehensive plans and the Federal planning requirements.

Forward Pinellas uses performance measures as part of their metropolitan transportation planning process, and have dedicated an entire chapter to performance measures which they call Measures of Effectiveness in their 2040 LRTP. The MPO has been using performance measures for a while and is determined to develop more effective measures for their next update. The performance measures the MPO has developed look at crashes, level of service, state of the system, etc. Health is another consideration and the MPO is currently looking at unique ways they can measure health in their LRTP and TIP.

The MPO has done an outstanding job of focusing on goals for the 2040 LRTP. Staff, with the help of the transit operator and local elected officials, did an extensive review of goals and decided that the 2040 LRTP should focus on national goals, state goals and regional goals. They have also incorporated the top 5% crash goal from FHWA into the LRTP.

**Noteworthy Practice:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice pertaining to the LRTP. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

**A. Travel Demand Modeling/Data**

Forward Pinellas has on staff at least one person responsible for travel demand forecasting. However, considerable support is provided by FDOT District 7. This activity is conducted in coordination with other regional partners and FDOT District 7 System Planning staff in the Technical Review Team (TRT) process. The TRT consists of technical staff representatives from the FDOT District 7 Intermodal Systems Development (ISD) Planning staff, each of the four District 7 MPOs (Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, and Hernando/Citrus), and other intermodal transportation and travel demand management agencies. The TRT meets bi-weekly and members provide input and review for overall technical guidance in the forecasting process. In addition, the members keep their respective bodies informed of the progress, results and decisions of this group.

The model used by Forward Pinellas in the transportation planning process is the District Seven Tampa Bay Regional Planning Model (TBRPM), which was developed in coordination with the other regional partners in the TRT. There is no formal agreement governing the TRT; however, decisions are made in consensus with the partners. The
MPOs are responsible for travel forecasting, however, FDOT operates the model on behalf of Forward Pinellas.

The current travel demand forecast model is the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Model (TBRPM), Version 8.1, last updated in October 2015. This model is a trip-based model and functions as a traditional four step model. The TBRPM is used for travel demand forecasting by the MPO.

B. Financial Plan/Fiscal Constraint

The Financial Plan section of the LRTP includes detailed analyses of the availability of funding from Federal, State, and local sources. The 2040 Forecast of State and Federal Revenues for Statewide and Metropolitan Plans provided the state and federal allocations attributable to Forward Pinellas. The traditional revenue sources and forecasted revenues anticipated for Forward Pinellas were evaluated and assessed to develop the projected revenues through the year 2040. Consistent with Federal requirements, revenues are shown in Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars to reflect inflation.

The FDOT Costing Tool was the primary source for development of the roadway project cost estimates. Forward Pinellas’ largest revenue source comes from Penny for Pinellas infrastructure sales taxes that allocated $388.2 (40% of total sales tax revenue) for transportation projects. The Highway Cost Feasible Plan contains major capital improvement programs with an estimated cost of $1.5 billion in YOE dollars. It also includes $194.2 million for bicycle and pedestrian projects, and $157 million for new bridge projects. The Transit Cost Feasible Plan outlines improvements to existing services and estimates total transit operating and capital costs equal to $1.97 billion in YOE dollars. The current Forward Pinellas 2040 LRTP is fiscally constrained.

Section VIII. Congestion Management Process (23 CFR 450.320)

The CMP is continuously monitored (it was last updated in 2015, with an update currently underway) and adjustments are made as needed to respond to regulatory changes, as well as changes in local conditions. As an example, for many years Forward Pinellas’ Congestion Management Process focused on hot spots and a few select corridors. The process was modified in 2014 to move toward a system wide approach, wherein all major roadways are screened for CMP strategy implementation.

The Forward Pinellas advisory committees play a critical role in the development and maintenance of the CMP. Additionally, the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) plays a critical role in coordinating communication with and input from representatives of Pinellas County local governments, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, TBARTA, FDOT, Forward Pinellas, PSTA and the Pinellas County School Board. The TCC makes recommendations on a variety of planning issues based on their technical merit.
The Forward Pinellas CMP has always been an integral part of the MPO’s planning process. However, adjustments to the organizational oversight and responsibility of the CMP were made to better integrate the CMP into the MPO’s other operations and management programs. Specifically, primary oversight for CMP prioritization activities was formalized under the MPO’s Transportation Mobility Management Advisory Committee (TMMAC). This committee is tasked with prioritizing areas for operations and management improvements. Performance Measures are used to measure the effectiveness of the CMP.

Section IX. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (23 CFR 450.324, 326, 328, 330, 332)

The Forward Pinellas TIP serves as a five-year financially feasible program of improvements for all modes of travel within Pinellas County, including sidewalks, transit improvements, bicycle facilities, and transportation enhancement activities to be funded by Title 23 USC and the Federal Transit Act. The TIP is adopted annually; the latest adoption was June 2016.

Financial constraint is demonstrated in the financial section of the MPO’s TIP. The TIP includes a narrative that explains the tables of revenues and costs by fund type that are reasonably anticipated over the five-year period of the TIP. The revenue totals shown sufficiently cover the anticipated project costs.

The TIP is developed in coordination with the FDOT, PSTA, local governments, TBARTA, and in accordance with the Federal requirements. Forward Pinellas also works in close coordination with MPOs in the region to identify regionally-significant transportation projects and intermodal facilities for inclusion in the LRTP and TIP as funding becomes available. Regional connectivity and consistency with the Regional LRTP is among the criteria for selecting priority projects for the TIP. These projects include regional multi-use trails and those identified for Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding. Regional priorities are also advanced by the TMA Leadership Group and forwarded to each MPO board annually for inclusion in the TIP. Each MPO in the TMA, including Forward Pinellas, includes the TMA regional priorities in their respective TIP priority lists.

In 2016, Forward Pinellas adopted a multimodal priority list for the first time. In prior years, the main priority list identifying projects for Surface Transportation Program (STP) and other Federal and State revenue sources was primarily made up of road capacity projects. With the new multimodal priority list, transit, pedestrian and bicycle projects now have the opportunity to compete for funding on par with major road projects. Priority projects on the multimodal list are initially identified through the LRTP development process, and pulled from the top priorities of individual lists representing road, transit, bicycle/pedestrian and system management and operations projects. The multimodal priority list is reviewed by the MPO’s advisory committees and the community through public outreach efforts prior to Board adoption and is updated annually to reflect changing priorities and completed projects.
**Noteworthy Practice and Recommendation:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice and offers one recommendation pertaining to the TIP. For more details about these items, please see Section X.

**Section X. Findings/Conclusions**

The following items represent a compilation of the findings that are included in this 2017 certification review report. These findings, which are identified as noteworthy practices, corrective actions, and recommendations, are intended to not only ensure continuing regulatory compliance of the Forward Pinellas transportation planning process with federal planning requirements, but to also foster high-quality planning practices and improve the transportation planning program in this TMA. Corrective Actions reflect required actions for compliance with the Federal Planning Regulations and must be completed within the timeframes noted. Recommendations reflect national trends and best practices, and are intended to provide assistance to the MPO to improve the planning process. Noteworthy Practices highlight efforts that demonstrate innovative ideas for implementing the planning requirements.

At the conclusion of the Federal Review site visit, the Federal Review Team asked the MPO staff if they had any training or technical assistance needs. The Forward Pinellas identified accessibility based measures, transportation and land use, automated connected vehicles, and ITS. FHWA and FTA will work with the MPO to provide resources in these areas.

**A. Noteworthy Practices**

1. **Bicycle/Pedestrian:** The Federal Review Team commends Forward Pinellas for the development and publication of the very popular Discover Pinellas bicycle and pedestrian guide and map. Forward Pinellas published approximately 35,000 maps and they were all distributed in two months and additional maps had to be published.

2. **Outreach and Public Participation:** While the use of social media is laudable, the team was particularly impressed with the MPO's insistence that tools include sufficient data and reporting in order to measure effectiveness. The MPO even discontinued service with one provider when it was unable to provide origination and other information about those accessing the MPO. The team is very interested to see how the MPO will continue to collect and use this cutting-edge data, particularly when assessing how various communities participate and their particular interests in various MPO plans and activities.

3. **Outreach and Public Participation:** The review team has never encountered an MPO with a CAC application process that resulted in an actual waiting list to serve. Moreover, the team applauds the MPO in successfully obtaining applications from those in underrepresented demographics. This can be a difficult step for government entities, but a necessary affirmative measure in ensuring
nondiscrimination and inclusion. The MPO’s process may provide solutions to other agencies that struggle to reach parity in public involvement.

4. **Title VI and Related Requirements (ADA):** The MPO continues its efforts to obtain better representation among underserved groups, including racial/ethnic minorities, those with disabilities, and younger system users on its committees and in its outreach. This includes use of an excellent CAC application form and coordination with service groups for BPAC services – those have more regular contact with vulnerable and hard to reach communities. The Team applauds these efforts and encourages the MPO to liaise with schools, social service groups and community organizations when seeking committee members. Doing so provides broader, lasting representation that is not always possible when relying on individual community members.

5. **Long Range Transportation Plan:** The review team commends the MPO’s efforts to build and implement performance measures for their LRTP. Their consideration of health equity as a performance measure in the 2040 LRTP and TIP is an excellent way to get local elected officials involved in transportation and publicize health officials’ information on how the transportation environment effects public health. Forward Pinellas’ efforts to build Performance Measures and to leverage ITS data in the Planning Process is also laudable. Additionally, the MPO is a leader in utilizing geospatial techniques to support Performance measures.

6. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** The Federal Review Team commends the MPO on their development and successful adoption of a single multimodal priority list that considers all modes and seeks to provide a level playing field for their consideration for funding and inclusion in the TIP.

7. **TMA Regional Coordination:** The Federal Review Team commends the Tampa Bay TMA MPOs and their regional transportation partners for their many regional coordination efforts. The consensus of the Federal Review Team and the participants of the certification review site visits is that regional coordination for this area is very strong. Although not currently a requirement in federal law, coordinating regionally with their nearby transportation partners is advantageous for highly populated and congested areas such as the Tampa Bay TMA to identify economies of scale and opportunities to leverage resources and efforts to advance mutual transportation goals and objectives. As this area continues to grow, robust regional coordination will be critical to further developing and maintaining the interconnectedness of the transportation system for residents living in the Tampa Bay TMA and surrounding counties.

B. **Corrective Actions**

There were no Corrective Actions identified during this review.
C. Recommendations

1. **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):** ITS creates various data streams that can be leveraged in the Planning Process. The MPO is very involved in the region’s ITS programs, but makes no mention of how ITS data can be collected and distributed to further enhance its travel monitoring, safety and other programs, and supplement traditional data collection methods that reflects real or near real time information. The Federal Review Team recommends that Forward Pinellas creates a program to leverage ITS data to further enhance its data programs.

2. **Outreach and Public Participation:** The Federal Review Team observed that the MPO appears to use the terms “public meeting” and “public hearing” interchangeably. From a federal perspective, these terms are very different. A public hearing must meet specific and more stringent requirements spelled out in law that may not apply to a public meeting. Federal law does not require the conducting of public hearings for planning activities. However, state law may dictate otherwise. Therefore, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO review and evaluate their processes and procedures to determine if a public hearing or public meeting is required/appropriate and revise language in their planning documents to reflect the interaction accordingly.

3. **Public Participation Plan (PPP):** The MPO last updated its PPP in 2016, better describing the MPO’s public involvement process and improving descriptions of visualization tools and the manner in which the public can participate. The Federal Review Team recommends the MPO review the PPP paying particular attention to the following:
   a. Ensuring that the PPP contains an adequate description of an MPO and its duties, something that is omnipresent on the website, but harder to locate in the PPP.
   b. Including a distinct section on how the PPP was developed in consultation with all parties. This description is not limited to just review and commentary, but the MPO should document and describe the process by which the public, MPO partners and stakeholders helped to develop the plan.
   c. Adding an appendix or other tool to describe the ‘alphabet soup’ of planning acronyms, i.e. LRTP, TIP, UPWP, LEP, ADA, Title VI, etc.
   d. Verifying that how to participate in situations where proposed amendments to the TIP cannot be reviewed by the Citizens Advisory Committee before Board action due to timing constraints is adequately described.

4. **Title VI and Related Requirements:**
   a. FHWA and FDOT have updated the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Sub-recipient Assurance which includes expanded contract clauses that the MPO must insert and require its contractors to inset into all of contract instruments. Moreover, for consultant contracts, the MPO must also
ensure that contracts include DBE Assurance Language from 49 CFR 26.13. The MPO should carefully review its procurement and contract documents, verifying that the correct nondiscrimination information is present and up to date.

b. FTA Region IV and FHWA Florida Division, in cooperation with FDOT, developed a standard template program plan that assists sub-recipients with meeting the various nondiscrimination requirements. The MPO should consider using this document as a guide before submitting the 2019 updated program plan. Doing so will result in more consistent nondiscrimination language and provide one stop shop for US DOT Title VI program information.

c. The MPO should clearly distinguish its DBE plan and goal as a direct recipient of FTA funding from the FDOT DBE program it must use as a sub-recipient of FHWA funds. Posting both is a strong practice that benefits both the MPO and the DBE program, however, unclear or incorrect information exposes the FDOT race-neutral program to constitutional challenge.

5. Title VI and Related Requirements (ADA): Under 28 CFR 35.105, all public entities, including MPOs are required to conduct a self-evaluation of programs and services for accessibility and where deficiencies are discovered, make necessary modifications for compliance. Though transition planning requirements under 28 CFR 35.150(d)(3) apply only to those entities with control over pedestrian rights of way, MPOs share a common minimum obligation; to ensure that all planning products include accessibility considerations and to involve the community with disabilities and their service representatives in the planning process. The MPO can continue to improve ADA compliance for itself and its local governments by coordinating survey/study activities; helping partners prioritize accessibility improvements; sharing pedestrian rights-of-way and condition data; identifying partners in need of training or technical assistance; and keeping FHWA and FDOT aware of innovative local programs or cost effective tools that might assist public agencies with meeting ADA requirements.

6. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): Although it is noted in the TIP Executive Summary narrative that project costs and revenues are shown in year of expenditure (YOE) dollars, there is no footnote/notation on the tables provided later in the document that indicates this fact. The Federal Review Team recommends that a notation be added to the appropriate tables in the TIP document to clarify that YOE dollars are being shown.

Based on the overall findings, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the Tampa Bay Area TMA, which is comprised in part by Forward Pinellas, substantially meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. This certification will remain in effect until June 2021.
Part III: Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization

Section I. Previous Certification Findings Status/Update

The following is a summary of the previous findings made by the Federal Review Team to the Pasco County MPO in 2013. There was one Corrective Action identified for the Pasco County MPO in the prior report.

A. Corrective Actions

1. Public Participation - Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs): Despite a previous certification recommendation and the regulatory requirement found in 23 CFR 230.316(a)(1)(x), the Pasco County MPO has not sufficiently documented its performance measure evaluation with regard to the PPP. Although the MPO’s current PPP adequately identifies public engagement evaluation measures, it appears that these measures have not been utilized to assess the MPO’s current public engagement activities. The MPO needs to provide an evaluation summary report of the measures of effectiveness currently identified in the PPP prior to the development of the next PPP update. The report will provide useful feedback and input into the development of the next PPP update. The report should also summarize the effectiveness of current public engagement activities and describe how the evaluation of current public participation activities will be used to determine future ones. For example, by analyzing the effort of outreach for the 2035 LRTP, what changes will MPO staff make for the 2040 LRTP update? The MPO needs to conduct an evaluation and develop summary report of the measures of effectiveness currently identified in the PPP to the MPO Board for their consideration by November 1, 2013.

Update: An evaluation was conducted and a Summary Report was provided to the MPO Board on October 10, 2013, for their consideration and feedback. The request to review the MPO’s actions and supporting materials was sent to FHWA/FTA on October 31, 2013 via email. FHWA/FTA found that this Corrective Action was satisfactorily completed in a December 3, 2013, letter addressed to the Pasco County MPO.

B. Recommendations

1. MPO Agreements: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO re-visit and revise, where necessary, the 2004 agreements and at a minimum provide an updated date of the most recent review of the agreement.

Update: This recommendation was completed on December 21, 2010. The MPO updated the staff service agreement which was approved by the board on March 7, 2017.
2. **Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee**: The Federal Review Team acknowledges the MPO’s creation of a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. During the review, questions about the anticipated make-up of this group could not be answered. The Federal Review Team recommends MPO staff consider adding the organization details of this committee to the MPO’s bylaws because this will be a standing committee.

**Update**: The MPO amended their Bylaws on April 4, 2017, and signed by the MPO Board on May 11, 2017, that added the make-up of the organization details of the committee.

3. **Transit (List of Obligated Projects)**: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO staff coordinate with FDOT and public transportation operator(s) to ensure that transit projects are included in the Annual List of Obligated projects for the next update.

**Update**: The MPO Website (wwwpascompo.net) has a stand-alone link to the Annual Listing of Projects Obligated in Preceding Year. The MPO coordinates with the Pasco County Public Transportation (PCPT) Division and FDOT to ensure that the transit projects are included in the MPO’s Annual List of Obligated Projects that was also approved by the MPO Board September 8, 2016. (http://www.pascocountyfl.net/index.aspx?nid=1697).

4. **Security**: The Federal Review Team recommends that the Pasco County MPO develop a standalone Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and perform a COOP exercise to identify any emergency processes that may need strengthening. At a minimum, the Federal Review Team recommends that the staff test the existing COOP that is housed within the County’s operations.

**Update**: The MPO is coordinating with the newly appointed Director for Pasco County Office of Emergency Management (EOC), and updating a new template to reflect the changes for the additional two new MPO staff members. The MPO anticipates completing the next COOP exercise by the end of the calendar year 2017.

5. **Safety**: In the Federal Review Team’s review of the MPO’s Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, it was noticed that the largest population of crashes occurred between the timeframe of 2006 – 2010, and occurred among those persons’ age 10-29. Therefore, the team encourages the MPO to provide targeted outreach towards this population, in hopes that these numbers can be impacted positively by the MPO’s planning efforts.

**Update**: The MPO staff is collaborating with several regional and local agencies to improve safety through implementation activities to educate bicycle and pedestrian target groups that are prone to high crashes, incidents or injuries along US 19 corridors. The MPO staff in conjunction with FDOT D-7 has also
participated in focused group meetings to address two high incident intersections to enhance safety on US 19 corridor for bike and pedestrians.

6. **Public Participation (Website):** While the Federal Review Team acknowledges that some changes to the MPO website may be difficult due to the site’s hosting by the County, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO staff review the current site and make sure the information is current and that planning documents are easy to access and download. During the desk audit for the certification review site visit, many members of the Federal Review Team had difficulty downloading primary planning documents. For large documents, such as the Long Range Transportation Plan, we recommend that staff hyperlink chapters of the plan, in addition to the complete document so individuals are not dissuaded from attempting to download a file that takes a long time to load.

**Update:** The MPO Public Participation Website has been improved. The planning documents are enhanced for easy downloading, and both the 2035 and 2040 LRTP chapters are hyperlinked for easy access and are word searchable.

7. **Public Participation Plan:** While the Pasco County MPO’s public participation plan is among the most complete the Federal Review Team has encountered, the MPO should ensure that it lists in the plan the name, title and contact information of the MPO representative responsible for administering the PPP (450.316(a)). MPO staff should make sure that the plan remains current with what the MPO staff is actively engaged in, including what links are currently available for access on the website. Staff should also ensure that the Public Participation Plan includes a section or discussion for unplanned and/or emergency meetings, and the window of public notice that will be given in the event that these meetings are needed.

**Update:** The MPO updated the PPP on February 13, 2014, to reflect the name and contact information of the designated MPO representative responsible for administering the PPP. The MPO staff is involved with ensuring that the plan remains current with what the MPO staff is actively engaged in, and the most up-to-date links are available for access on the website. The PPP includes a section for how the MPO addresses meetings that are unplanned and/or emergency, and the advertisement requirements for how notices are provided in the event these meetings are needed.
8. **Title VI (Nondiscrimination Program):** Pasco County MPO annually reviews its Title VI/Nondiscrimination Program documents for sufficiency and to ensure nondiscrimination in its programs, services and activities in compliance with 23 CFR 200.9(b)(5) and (6). The MPO will shortly undertake its review of the program for 2013. As it does so, FHWA recommends that the MPO ensure that its program documents contain:

   a. The name and contact information for the employee designated the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator. At a minimum, the employee should be listed by name on Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy.

   b. An organization chart that shows direct, dotted line access from the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator to the Executive Director of the MPO.

   c. Consistent use of correct nondiscrimination language and the protected classes wherever the MPO references nondiscrimination. The MPO may wish to consider developing a standard nondiscrimination statement that contains a link to the full policy and complaint filing procedure. The MPO may then ensure optimum access by placing the language and link on all documents meant for the public.

   d. Translating its Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy and complaint filing procedure into Spanish, to ensure compliance with 23 CFR 200.9(b)(12).

**Update:** This recommendation was completed in December 2013. The name and contact information for Title VI Specialist/Coordinator was added to program documents. The organization chart has been updated to reflect the direct line from the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator to MPO Executive Director. In addition, the MPO consistently uses correct nondiscrimination language and protected classes are referenced wherever nondiscrimination is addressed. The MPO has also translated their Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy and complaint filing procedure into Spanish.

9. **Title VI (UPWP):** Pasco County MPO’s nondiscrimination policy is somewhat buried in the UPWP and not likely to be identified by the general public. The MPO should consider moving the information to a more visible location, perhaps developing a direct link to a nondiscrimination page.

**Update:** The MPO now provides a direct link to the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy on the website. The Pasco County Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Title VI Discrimination Complaint Procedure was updated on March 9, 2017.

10. **Transportation Improvement Program (Fiscal Constraint):** The Federal Review Team acknowledges that the Pasco County MPO includes broad language related to fiscal constraint within financial plan and financial summary sections of the 2012/2013-2016/2017 TIP. Although these explanations convey an understanding of fiscal constraint, the Federal Team recommends additional documentation to support the TIP in displaying fiscal constraint beyond the general statement that the TIP is constrained by year and the MPO adheres to the FDOT Work program. For example, through the use of additional text or
illustrative tools, such as tables or figures consistent with MPO statements, the MPO will be transparent to the public on the TIP’s fiscal constraint.

**Update:** The MPO is in the process of updating the new TIP that will provide a funding summary for Federal and State to show fiscal constraint by December 2017.

**Section II. Boundaries and Organization (23 CFR 450.310, 312, 314)**

**A. Description of Planning Area**

Pasco County is located on Florida’s central west coast spanning over 745 square miles. The largest city is New Port Richey. Pasco, together with Hernando, Hillsborough, and Pinellas Counties, comprise the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Pasco County’s population was 464,697 based on the 2010 Census. Compared to the population estimates in 2016, the county supports a population of 497,909; an increase of 7% in a six-year timespan. Pasco County also consists of two incorporated areas: The City of New Port Richey represents the largest incorporated population, and the City of Zephyrhills represents the second largest incorporated population. The population growth in Pasco County continues to outpace the population growth for Florida, and will result in conglomeration or mixing of urbanized areas.

![Map of Pasco County](image)

**B. Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure**

The Pasco County MPO’s overall make up has not changed since the last Certification Review. However, the MPO has a New Chairman and Vice-Chairman as of February 9, 2017. The Pasco County MPO is still composed of publicly elected municipal and county officials and has nine voting members. The MPO membership is comprised of: five County Commissioners from Pasco County (one from each commission district); and one member from each of the cities of New Port Richey, Zephyrhills, Dade City, and Port Richey. With the exception of the five county commissioners from Pasco County who receive two votes per member, the rest of the members have one vote.
The Pasco County MPO has five dedicated staff members including the following positions: Transportation Planning Manager, Senior Transportation Engineer, Senior Planner, and Development Review Technician. Currently one MPO staff position is vacant. In addition, a Bicycle and Pedestrian coordinator (Active Transportation Planner) works with MPO staff and manages the bicycle/pedestrian planning program. The MPO also has five standing committees: the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), the Congestion Management Task Force, and the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board.

C. Agreements

The MPO's agreements substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314. The MPO had one agreement for the BPAC Advisory Committee Bylaws that was amended February 28, 2017 and approved April 4, 2017.

Section III. Scope of the Planning Process (23 CFR 450.306)

A. Transportation Planning Factors

23 CFR 450.306 requires that the metropolitan transportation planning process explicitly consider and analyze a number of specific planning factors that reflect sound planning principles. The Pasco County MPO addresses the required planning factors throughout the planning process and in the development of transportation planning products such as the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP. The planning factors are also incorporated into the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the LRTP.

B. Air Quality

Pasco County is currently designated as an attainment area for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Activities

The Pasco County MPO is significantly engaged in bicycle and pedestrian planning. The primary advisory committee to the MPO board regarding bicycle and pedestrian activities and issues is the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). The BPAC’s Mission statement is: "To promote cycling and walking in Pasco County by promoting public awareness, improving safety, extending connectivity, as well as encouraging a friendly and healthy lifestyle through everyday transportation alternatives." The Pasco County MPO, Forward Pinellas, and the Hillsborough MPO all participate in the new regional Tri County Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

Since the last certification review, the MPO has obtained a dedicated Bicycle and Pedestrian staff position. The Pasco County penny sales tax is funding feasibility and alignment studies underway by the MPO. The MPO focus is on connectivity of trails. A number of trail studies and designs are underway including: the Anclote Coastal Trail,
the Starkey Gap and Tri-county Trail in conjunction with the Florida Coast to Coast Trail and a U.S. 301 connectivity study, the Withlacoochee Trail, the Northeast Pasco Rural Hills Multimodal Safety Study, the Northeast Multiuse Path, and the Orange Belt Trail. The MPO staff coordinated the update to Pasco County’s Greenways, Blueways and Trails (GTB) map that sets a vision of future trails and multiuse pathways countywide. The GTB maps shows the MPO’s trail network and shall be used as the guiding reference document for greenway/trail/blueway connectivity and access, consistent with the current MPO LRTP – Multiuse Trails Map.

One of the next steps identified in the LRTP states that the MPO will prepare a comprehensive bicycle/pedestrian master plan to better define specific projects and opportunities for nonmotorized transportation improvements. In addition, the master plan will include a comprehensive update to the inventory of sidewalks and bicycle facilities, which will assist in more easily performing spatial evaluation of future needs and opportunities.

D. Transit

Transit service in Pasco County is provided by Pasco County Public Transportation (PCPT), a division under the Pasco County Board of Commissioners. PCPT provides fixed route and ADA Para-transit services in Pasco County. PCPT operates 18 fixed route buses and 11 ADA Para-transit vehicles. According to the National Transit Database (2014), PCPT provides over 1,000,000 transit trips annually. PCPT also provides connectivity to Pinellas and Hillsborough County transit systems that are also located in the Tampa-St. Petersburg urbanized area.

PCPT serves on the MPO board and several subcommittees. PCPT is closely involved in the MPO planning process with the review of the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP through the various subcommittees. The above working relationships have established a high level of cooperation between PCPT and the MPO in the transportation planning process for the metropolitan area.

The MPO is the sub-recipient of FTA Section 5305(d) Statewide and Metropolitan Planning program funding awarded and passed through from FDOT. The FTA Apportionment for Section 5307 Urbanized Area formula funds is to the Tampa-St. Petersburg UZA, which includes the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART), Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), Pasco County Public Transit (PCPT), and the Tampa Bay Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA). PCPT, PSTA and HART are all FTA designated recipients. There is a split agreement in place that is applied to the UZA Apportionment to divide the funding between each transit agency. The split agreement is provided to FTA annually. After the funds are divided, each transit agency submits an application to FTA for the Section 5307 funds. Since 2013, Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) is also included in the annual split of 5307 funds as a Direct Recipient. The MPO and PCPT staffs work closely together on all transit planning activities.
The MPO coordinates with FDOT and PCTP in the development of the TIP and LRTP. The MPO relies on the adopted Transit Development Plan (TDP) for transit projects in the TIP. The MPO updates the TDP every five years for the transit operator. The MPO uses the TDP as the foundation for the next LRTP update.

The State of Florida also provides transit funding to PCPT. PCPT is a direct recipient of 5307 funds through FDOT for the small urbanized area of Zephyrhills that is located in the eastern part of the county. To date, flexible funds have not been appropriated/allocated for transit related projects. However, MPO staff is evaluating options for such transfers to occur in the future based on projects that will be identified in the update of the TDP that is currently scheduled for FY 2017-2018.

Pasco County has implemented a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) program as a source of transit capital and operating funds. Although a relatively new concept, this source of local funding has allowed for transit expansion of service including the new Moon Lake Route. The MPO provides policy guidance in this regard and assists in identifying eligible projects and ensures consistency with the adopted TDP.

**Corrective Action:** The Federal Review Team identified one corrective action pertaining to the Transit. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

**E. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)**

The goal of the Regional ITS architecture is to ensure compatibility in ITS technology and user interface across the region. The MPO adopted the regional architecture in 2004 and updated their ITS improvement plan as part of the 2040 LRTP development process. In addition to the previously added traffic management center providing communication with the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) project on U.S. 19, the MPO assisted the County in securing funds to create a traffic management center providing communication with the ATMS projects on U.S. 19, S.R.54, C.R.1, and Ridge Road.

Currently, 911 operations are also communicating with the Pasco County Office of Emergency Management to receive video displays of incidents. The goal is to connect all management centers in the region with FDOT’s District 7 center, which is an ongoing effort as noted in the last TMA review.

Development of regional architecture was coordinated with ITS stakeholders in Pasco County, i.e. Public Transportation office and the Traffic Operations Division. The current regional ITS architecture was last updated December 2015. FDOT coordinates ITS activities that are regional in scope or when state and federal funds are used, such as existing or planned ITS projects on I-75, U.S. 19, and S.R.54, C.R.1 and Ridge Road. ITS is identified as one of the strategies in the local and regional Congestion Management Process (CMP). Any ITS project deployment on city or county maintained roads, within county or crossing county lines, will be coordinated with the affected MPO or local jurisdiction.
F. Freight Planning

The Pasco County area is an active hub of freight movement both in exports and imports. FDOT District 7 leads the regional planning efforts for goods movement and freight logistics in the Tampa Bay region. The MPO has been an active participant in the development of the Tampa Bay Regional Strategic Freight Plan serving on the Goods Movement Advisory Committee (GMAC), the MPO worked closely with FDOT District 7 and other stakeholders, mainly the Pasco Economic Development Council and County’s Office of Economic Growth staff, to develop freight mobility needs/strategies and freight compatibility objectives for the Strategic Plan. The MPO has identified some freight related objectives that are integrated with the CMP that will be incorporated into the update of MPO’s MOBILITY 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

According to the FDOT District Seven, the Investment Strategy for Freight Mobility and Economic Prosperity in Tampa Bay is a reference that is used by the MPO to address goods movement as part of the MOBILITY 2040 Plan. The MPO is also looking at ways to address hotspot truck related issues through a comprehensive data base for improvements to truck routes. The routes that are in need of improvement will be given a higher ranking weighted factor.

The 2040 LRTP contains a specific goal to promote freight movement, and multimodal freight needs and considerations are interwoven throughout the goals for improving system continuity and connectivity, increasing safety for the system users and promoting multimodal solutions. The LRTP identified the freight activity centers, corridors, and distribution routes within the MPO area. The LRTP also used the results of an analysis – which identified freight flows, the routes various freight providers used, and freight concerns and potential improvements – to develop of the Cost Feasible Plan.

G. Security Considerations in the Planning Process

The MPO’s 2040 LRTP contains a security goal that includes increasing the security of the transportation system for its users. This security element also incorporates the goals from the local transit provider’s safety and security planning review process, plans and programs. Security considerations were used in the development of the 2040 LRTP. The MPO’s is coordinating with the Pasco County Office of Emergency Management to conduct a COOP exercise with the newly hired Director. The new COOP template and review of departmental staff have been initiated and anticipates having this update completed by the end of the calendar year. The MPO has a section on their webpage devoted to safety preparation to assist citizens in case there is a tornado or severe weather in the county.

**Recommendation:** The Federal Review Team offers one recommendation pertaining to security in the planning process. For more details about this item, please see Section X.
H. Safety Considerations in the Planning Process

Pasco County MPO has an extensive safety element in their MOBILITY 2040 LRTP, which is consistent with Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The Pasco County MPO is dedicated to making safety a key priority within their metropolitan transportation planning process. Safety is considered in almost every aspect of the program and is evident by reviewing plans and programs on the MPO’s webpage. There are safety performance measures in the Congestion Management Process and they also have developed performance measures for the LRTP. The performance measures established for the CMP are linked to those which are in the LRTP. This linkage is a good practice for the MPO and can assist the MPO in integrating safety into its transportation planning process.

The MPO also spotlights safety in work zones and has developed the Northeast Pasco (The Hills) Multimodal Safety Action Plan. The study was created to address current conditions, stakeholder concerns (which include bicyclists and local residents), commonly used bicycle routes, and priorities for the northeast area of Pasco County. The bicycle safety measures developed will consider engineering solutions, education strategies, and enforcement options. The MPO has been soliciting input from interested parties to provide insight into the areas that are of the most concern for all users. A public meeting was held on August 18, 2016, and a bicyclist outreach event was held on August 5 and 6, 2017, at the most popular ride locations. The MPO staff and their consultant have identified conditions and are in the process of creating action plans for recommended routes, which is planned to be completed by December 2017. (http://www.pascocountyfl.net/index.aspx?nid=323)

The MPO also utilizes safety as a key element in the ranking of their Transportation Alternatives projects. Transportation Alternatives projects are federally funded, community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by integrating modes and improving the cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure. They are typically activities that are initiated from the Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancements, and Safe Routes to School programs. As part of their project prioritization process, the MPO utilizes safety as one of their goals for sidewalks and trails. The MPO approved their latest listing of priority projects for 2017-2018 on September 8, 2016.

The MPO participates on a regional Crash Safety Team which meets every month. The team includes Florida Department of Transportation, other MPOs in the area, and local safety and operations specialists. The team looks at solutions for integrating safety into the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning process. They also review projects that have safety concerns within the Pasco area. The MPO is very supportive of the Crash Safety Team and has taken advantage of the team’s technical expertise by getting their input to MPO plans and programs involving safety, specifically, the LRTP, CMP, and TIP.

**Noteworthy Practice:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice pertaining to Safety Considerations in the Planning Process. For more details about this item, please see Section X.
Section IV. Unified Planning Work Program (23 CFR 450.308)

The Pasco County MPO adopted their most recent UPWP in May 2016. The Pasco County MPO FY 2016/17 – 2017/18 UPWP covers transportation planning activities/products for two fiscal years and contains sufficient description of the costs and activities the MPO plans to complete. The County, via the staff services agreement, acts as the budget officer for the MPO overseeing the funding and expenditure budgets, including the annual County budget and annual audit. The MPO staff monitors the Federal funds and expenditures as shown in the adopted UPWP, including staff time/salaries per task, and coordinating departments’ staff services charges, purchases, and consultant services. The MPO receives production support through various county departments through a charge back system based on eligible work in accordance with the adopted UPWP as authorized by the MPO Director/Manager. The MPO bills on a quarterly basis for their reimbursement requests.

Each MPO/TPO member of the Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) earmarks a portion of their UPWP budget to support regional tasks. For UPWP development, these regional tasks are developed jointly between the region’s MPOs for consistent reporting in the respective MPO UPWPs to ensure that regional coordination continues to occur.

During the development of the UPWP, MPO staff coordinates with the Pasco County Public Transit staff in the identification of transit planning activities and end products. The staffs also work closely together through their continuing and cooperative efforts related to data-sharing, reviewing existing plans (transit accommodations), and jointly managing transit related planning projects.

As part of this certification, the Federal Review Team conducted a financial review of the Pasco County MPO. The primary objective of this financial review was to establish the level of reliability, effectiveness, and compliance with Federal requirements that can be placed on the MPO’s internal controls in order to review, analyze, and submit reimbursement for federal funds. Primary emphasis was placed on determining the adequacy and completeness of management internal controls, documentation, and standard operating procedures.

Pasco County MPO adheres to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and ensures that they are followed by both the county and by the MPO. With regard to source documentation, everything charged must have source documentation; for example, maintenance on the office machines, along with distribution of costs. Furthermore, the MPO stated that they maintain documents for a minimum of seven years and some documents up to 15 years.

Pasco County MPO has procedures for Payroll and Timekeeping. Payroll follows the county's procedures, and all MPO staff are employees of the county. Timesheets are submitted every two weeks and are required to be signed by both employee and supervisor. Timesheets are annotated by actual hours worked and are available upon request.
The results of the financial review disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other findings that are required to be reported under FHWA standards or policies. Furthermore, the Federal Review Team has reasonable assurance that Pasco County MPO’s financial processes and internal controls are compliant with applicable laws, regulations, policies and agreements to ensure general financial integrity.

**Recommendation:** The Federal Review Team offers one recommendation pertaining to the Unified Planning Work Program. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

**Section V. Interested Parties (23 CFR 450 316)**

**A. Outreach and Public Participation**

Although the smallest of the Tampa TMA transportation planning organizations, Pasco County MPO is a strong proponent of and vehicle for extensive public involvement. As noted in past certifications, the MPO prides itself on its Public Participation Plan (PPP), a document that encompasses all the federal requirements along with charts, graphs, pictures and other visualization tools to facilitate readability. Pasco’s PPP is a governing document that explicitly describes its public involvement rather than providing a more general policy document to guide outreach. In fact, the MPO uses notable activities from its scrapbook to give PPP readers not only a list of current strategies, but also to highlight noteworthy past events. For example, in describing its use of newsletters, the MPO provides an excerpt with pictures of the publication. Similarly, to explain how the MPO notifies Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations of services, the MPO uses a past Spanish-language advertisement for Access Pasco. The MPO even includes a description of its website, complete with a helpful graphic and instructions on how to enlarge font, translate information into another language and access the various planning products.

At first read, the PPP appears to be a longer document than is strictly necessary, including repetitive information on various topics, such as board membership. However, the redundancy is intentional, as the MPO separates (and color coordinates) each PPP section with the understanding that the public may only want to access specific information, i.e. public notification requirements, or how the MPO engages the underserved. Because no one section is entirely stand-alone, the MPO includes salient information in each. The PPP is available online and at the government centers in New Port Richey and Dade City in hardcopy. Copies of the PPP are also available upon request to the County’s library branches.

As part of its PPP, the MPO maintains a Community Characteristics Inventory to describe how it engages underserved populations, and to identify areas where an increase in population or change in diversity may require specific MPO focus. As with most Florida MPOs, vulnerable populations not only include racial/ethnic minorities and low income, but also the elderly and those that require language services. A new inventory and corresponding maps are developed in preparation for PPP and LRTP
updates, ensuring that considerations are timely and align with the most recent available census information. As such, the MPO will review its measures of effectiveness and the overall PPP before undertaking updates later in 2017.

Arguably the biggest accomplishment for the MPO’s public involvement program since the last certification has been the improvements to the website. As a department of the Pasco County government, the MPO was historically unable to control the look and content of its webpage. While the site still lacks a distinct MPO brand, it is much more user friendly and logically organized, with links to document sections rather than entire planning products. In addition, the MPO has been able to advance its use of social media, even establishing a YouTube link.

**Recommendations:** The Federal Review Team offers two recommendations pertaining to Outreach and Public Participation. For more details about this item, please see Section X.

**B. Tribal Coordination**

There are no federally recognized tribes located in the MPO area that require formal coordination with the MPO.

**C. Title VI and Nondiscrimination:**

Each of Florida’s MPOs continues to make meaningful nondiscrimination efforts in planning products and other services, and Pasco County MPO is no exception. For example, for its 2040 LRTP, the MPO layered expenditures over its community characteristics inventory maps, allowing analysis of funding equity. This is important, since denser, more vocal populations in west Pasco could potentially outweigh the less-involved, yet more vulnerable communities in the northeast part of the county. In addition, the MPO continues to rely on ETDM to screen capital improvement projects for disparate impacts, and also uses accessibility and other sociocultural effect considerations to rank Transportation Alternative Projects. More tools are now available from USDOT and FHWA for conducting equity analyses that should assist the MPO as it explores the best methods of ensuring nondiscrimination and service equity.

While the MPO has no specific examples of equity analyses impacting specific projects, it is clear that a heightened sensitivity to public needs and concerns has led to some notable decisions. One example is the so-called ‘Pasco Fiasco’, in which plans to elevate portions of the heavily congested SR 54/56 corridor met with such resistance that the MPO changed its approach, developing a multi-phased study to better include grassroots public input. Another example is transit service along this same corridor. In past years, there was limited east-west public transit opportunity along SR 54. Now, services are not only available, but the transit agency has shortened headway from two hours to one, and added connecting routes that serve both north Pasco and other low income, significantly minority communities. Another example is the completion of connected sidewalks along U.S. 19 within the borders of Pasco County. Though the
MPO is quick to assert that this accomplishment is the product of a much larger team, including FDOT and its municipalities, the result is a lighted pedestrian corridor along the most traveled roadway in the county, which is accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities. The project represents the nexus of public involvement, resource identification, community needs, and economic development.

Since the last certification, the MPO has taken active steps in furthering pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. Although trails are a community priority, the MPO has ensured that only projects that provide connections to existing sidewalks or other trails are advanced. Thus, the MPO remains steadfast in facilitating accessibility improvements, although the maintenance of older sidewalks presents a challenge. These efforts are important, in that under 28 CFR 35.105, all public entities, including MPOs are required to conduct a self-evaluation of programs and services for accessibility and where deficiencies are discovered, make necessary modifications for compliance. Though transition planning requirements under 28 CFR 35.150(d)(3) apply to those entities with control over pedestrian rights of way, MPOs share a common minimum obligation; to ensure that all planning products include accessibility considerations and to involve the community with disabilities and their service representatives in the planning process.

The MPO continues to improve ADA compliance for itself and its local governments by coordinating survey/study activities, helping partners prioritize accessibility improvements, sharing Pedestrian Right of Way and condition data, identifying partners in need of training or technical assistance, and keeping FHWA and FDOT aware of innovative local programs or cost effective tools that might assist public agencies with meeting ADA requirements.

The MPO has a sufficiently broad nondiscrimination policy and complaint filing procedure, as well as a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan in compliance with 23 CFR 200.9 and related authorities. The link to the nondiscrimination page is prominently displayed on the MPO’s website and it includes a firm and legally correct MPO statement explaining the law and encouraging the public to contact the Title VI Coordinator with questions or concerns. In previous years, FHWA required annual review and update of recipient and sub-recipient nondiscrimination documents. FHWA is now aligned with FTA in permitting TMAs to complete these updates every three years. This requirement means that the MPO will need to conduct its nondiscrimination program review and update by March 2020, including: executing a new (Title VI/Nondiscrimination Sub-recipient Assurance); reviewing and, if necessary again updating, demographic data for its Community Characteristics Inventory and LEP Plan; and ensuring that nondiscrimination and Title VI contact information is broadly disseminated, and in languages other than English, if appropriate.

**Recommendations:** The Federal Review Team offers two recommendations pertaining to Title VI. For more details about these items, please see Section X.
Section VI. Linking Planning and Environment (23CFR 450.318)

MPO staff has been supporting the FDOT’s Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process by providing comments from both staff and citizens regarding projects going through the ETDM process. The ETDM process was used to evaluate each of the projects within the LRTP. The MPO also coordinates with FDOT to provide input and comment on projects and takes the lead on the preparation of a Purpose and Need statement as part of the LRTP development for projects not on a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facility.

The MPO consulted state and local agencies/governments during the development of the LRTP. The Pasco County Economic Development Council (PCEDC), Southwest Florida Water Management District, FDOT, the MPO’s Technical Advisory/Congestion Management Committees, and the LRTP Working Group, provided the MPO with GIS data of existing conservation areas. During the Needs Assessment process, this information was used to conduct an evaluation of the potential impacts to wildlife, habitat, and wetlands, as well as an evaluation of the potential cost of environmental mitigation for each facility in the needs network.

According to the MPO’s LRTP, as projects move beyond the planning stage, specific environmental mitigation plans will be developed. Options typically include potential use of mitigation banking or on-site mitigation to restore, create, enhance and/or preserve the natural environment.

Section VII. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) (23 CFR 450.322)

Pasco County MPO adopted the 2040 LRTP in December 2014. The plan was developed by the MPO in collaboration with FDOT, Pasco County, and the committees of the MPO. An LRTP Working Group comprised of City and County departments, and environmental and community groups, was created specifically to assist in the technical development of the plan. The MPO hosted a visioning workshop for the MOBILITY 2040 LRTP with the MPO Board, two public workshops, and twelve Working Group meetings. The MOBILITY 2040 is a data-driven, comprehensive and multimodal transportation plan that relied heavily on public contributions to help identify and prioritize transportation projects in the development of the LRTP. MOBILITY 2040 considers not only needed roadway improvements, but also public transportation, bicycle, pedestrian, multi-use trail, sidewalk, freight, and other transportation projects. The MOBILITY 2040 also includes considerations for land use compatibility, safety, security, congestion and mobility management, goods movement, environmental resources, and regional coordination.

The MOBILITY 2040 LRTP will provide a guide for future LRTP updates, for the TIP, the MPO’s list of priority projects, UPWP, and for other county, city, and municipalities within the MPO planning area. The LRTP is available on the MPO website and in the MPO office. Hard copies are available to the public upon request.
The Pasco County MPO provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate how each planning factor is being considered in the LRTP, and the goals and objectives of the LRTP are consistent with local comprehensive plans and the Federal planning requirements.

The Pasco County MPO has had performance management as part of the transportation planning process for a few years now. In 2014, the MPO updated their LRTP and CMP by using performance measures. This process was implemented to get a head start on future requirements. The MPO is researching what other MPOs in the country are doing to meet this requirement, and continues discussions at a regional level to address consistency for transit targets.

A. Travel Demand Modeling/Data

FDOT manages consulting work through the Technical Review Team (TRT) to maintain and update the regional travel forecasting model. The TRT consists of technical staff representatives from the FDOT District 7, each of the four District 7 MPOs (Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, and Hernando), Citrus County, and other area intermodal transportation and travel demand management agencies. During the LRTP development and process, the MPO staff had direct and frequent contact with FDOT and the modeling consultant.

The MPO staff participates in the District 7 Model coordination, and the Technical Review Team meets monthly to ensure the consistency of model applications, model refinements, and future coordination among all participants’ meetings to receive the latest technical requirements for LRTP development. In addition, the members keep their respective bodies informed of the progress, results and decisions of this group.

B. Financial Plan/Fiscal Constraint

Assumptions for future federal and state revenues are provided to the MPO by the Florida Department of Transportation. In order to meet the Year of Expenditure requirements, FDOT estimates of revenues are provided in 5 year totals and reflect future year estimates. The Financial Plan section of the LRTP demonstrate fiscal constraint and includes detailed analyses of the availability of funding from federal, state, and county sources. The traditional revenue sources and forecasted revenues anticipated for Pasco County were evaluated and assessed in order to develop the projected revenues through the year 2040. The MOBILITY 2040 LRTP reflects a $7.2 billion transportation program from 2020 to 2040.

In 2012, 70 percent of Pasco County voters approved the continuation of the one-penny Local Government Infrastructure Surtax, extending the effective period for 10 years, through December 2024. The MOBILITY 2040 Plan relies on the reasonable conclusion of extending the one-penny surtax beyond 2025 through the 2040 horizon of the plan under the provisions of the Charter County Surtax. This new revenue is applied to projects at a ratio of 75 percent for transit and 25 percent for roadways. The assumption
of this revenue is a replacement of the existing Penny for Pasco revenue that will sunset in 2024.

Section VIII. Congestion Management Process (CMP) (23 CFR 450.320)

The CMP area for the MPO includes all of Pasco County. The transportation facilities included in the Pasco County MPO CMP are documented in Chapter 4, finalized in March 2016. This multimodal network includes all functionally classified roadways in the adopted LRTP and/or the existing plus committed (E+C) five-year road network. The CMP includes information for all existing modes of travel including roadways, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, trails, goods movement, and transit.

The CMP has a performance monitoring plan documented in Chapter 6 that addresses system-wide performance. This performance monitoring plan is implemented in the State of the System report. The CMP State of the System report can be updated as often as annually, but is typically updated on a five-year cycle. The CMP State of the System report was last updated for 2014 conditions. The MPO’s Congestion Management Process is supported by the CMP Task Force which is comprised of the MPO’s transportation partners. The CMP Task Force is responsible for identifying issues and tracking progress of the MPO’s annual priority list of projects.

Section IX. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (23 CFR 450.324, 326, 328, 330, 332)

The most recently adopted (June 2016) Pasco County MPO TIP (FYs 2016-17 through 2020-21) serves as a five-year financially feasible program of improvements for all modes of travel within Pasco County, including sidewalks, transit improvements, bicycle facilities, and transportation enhancement activities to be funded by Title 23 U.S.C. and the Federal Transit Act. The TIP includes projects and programs that can be implemented using current and proposed revenue sources based on the FDOT Tentative Work Program and local transportation revenues, as well as local projects receiving incentive grants such as TRIP and County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP) funds. The TRIP funds are used to fund regionally significant transportation projects developed in a coordinated manner with other MPOs in the region.

FDOT develops project costs for state and federally funded projects based on current trends and estimates. These costs are balanced against the budget of available revenues produced by FDOT, and provided to the MPO via the FDOT Tentative Work Program, which outlines the projects and costs that are programmed during the next five years. An estimate of federal and state funds is also provided to the MPO by FDOT.

The TIP includes the results of the multi-modal project prioritization and selection process that is conducted in coordination with FDOT, the MPO, and the municipalities within Pasco County. The project priority list is largely based on the results of developing the MOBILITY 2040 Cost Feasible Plan and subsequent MPO Policy Board input. The higher the priority dictates which projects are selected to be programmed into
the TIP. The project selection and prioritization process is outlined in the TIP, which is approved by the MPO Board each year.

**Corrective Actions:** The Federal Review Team identified two corrective actions pertaining to the TIP. For more details about these items, please see Section X.

**Section X. Findings/Conclusions**

The following items represent a compilation of the findings that are included in this 2017 certification review report. These findings, which are identified as noteworthy practices, corrective actions, and recommendations, are intended to not only ensure continuing regulatory compliance of the Pasco County MPO transportation planning process with federal planning requirements, but to also foster high-quality planning practices and improve the transportation planning program in this TMA. Corrective Actions reflect required actions for compliance with the Federal Planning Regulations and must be completed within the timeframes noted. Recommendations reflect national trends and best practices, and are intended to provide assistance to the MPO to improve the planning process. Noteworthy Practices highlight efforts that demonstrate innovative ideas for implementing the planning requirements.

At the conclusion of the Federal Review site visit, the Federal Review Team asked the MPO staff if they had any training or technical assistance needs. The Pasco County MPO identified census assistance, capacity, safety performance measures, and traffic safety data management. FHWA and FTA will work with the MPO to provide resources in these areas.

**A. Noteworthy Practices**

1. **Safety:** The MPO is commended for the development and linkage of safety performance measures within the LRTP and CMP. This is an effective practice that strengthens the tie between transportation safety and planning. The Pasco County MPO should continue to use this process as they develop their transportation plans and programs.

2. **Title VI and Related Requirements (ADA):** The MPO continues its efforts to obtain better representation among underserved groups, including racial/ethnic minorities, those with disabilities, and younger system users on its committees and in its outreach. This effort includes coordination with service groups that have more regular contact with these communities. The Federal Review Team applauds these efforts and encourages the MPO to liaise with schools, social service groups and community organizations when seeking committee members. Doing so provides broader, lasting representation that is not always possible when relying on individual community members.
3. **TMA Regional Coordination:** The Federal Review Team commends the Tampa Bay TMA MPOs and their regional transportation partners for their many regional coordination efforts. The consensus of the Federal Review Team and the participants of the certification review site visits is that regional coordination for this area is very strong. Although not currently a requirement in federal law, coordinating regionally with their nearby transportation partners is advantageous for highly populated and congested areas such as the Tampa Bay TMA to identify economies of scale and opportunities to leverage resources and efforts to advance mutual transportation goals and objectives. As this area continues to grow, robust regional coordination will be critical to further developing and maintaining the interconnectedness of the transportation system for residents living in the Tampa Bay TMA and surrounding counties.

### B. Corrective Actions

1. **Transit:** Annual Listing of Obligated Projects – Upon review of the planning documents during the desk audit, and subsequent discussion with TPO staff, it was discovered that transit projects were not included in the annual listing of obligated projects. In accordance with CFR 450.332(a) “In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.” Based on this requirement, Pasco County MPO staff needs to coordinate with FDOT and the public transportation operator(s) to ensure that transit projects are included in the Annual List of Obligated Projects. **An Annual List of Obligated Projects for transit projects must be completed by December 31, 2017, making it available in a manner consistent with the MPO's Public Participation Process for the TIP.**

2. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** No information is provided in the TIP as to whether project costs are presented in Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars, as required in 23 CFR 450.324(h). The type of estimate is not footnoted nor mentioned anywhere in the TIP narrative. The MPO needs to verify that the funding amounts are shown in YOE and amend the TIP to document the use of YOE to meet this requirement. The TIP must be changed by November 30, 2017.

3. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** While the Pasco County MPO's TIP (FYs 2016-17 through 2020-21) includes broad language related to fiscal constraint within the TIP, there is no discussion of revenues available, or funding estimates with which to compare revenues/expenditures by year. Additional documentation in the TIP to support and demonstrate fiscal constraint by year is needed beyond the general statement that the TIP is constrained by year and the
MPO adheres to the FDOT Work program. The MPO stated at the site visit that they would provide this information in a table in the next TIP (FYs 2017-18 through 2021-22). However, the table provided in the draft TIP did not display an adequate level of detail as required per 23 CFR 450.324 (h) and (i). **The MPO must amend the TIP by November 30, 2017, to provide a clear demonstration of fiscal constraint by year.**

C. Recommendations

1. **Security:** The Federal Review Team recommends that the Pasco County MPO develop a standalone Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and perform a COOP exercise to identify any emergency processes that may need strengthening. At a minimum, the Federal Review Team recommends that the staff test the existing COOP that is housed within the County’s operations.

2. **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):** While it appears that the MPO addressed the previously submitted FHWA/FTA comments provided for the UPWP with the posting on the MPO’s website of an administrative modification dated June 22, 2016, the posting does not provide all the amended pages that the comments related to. Additionally, the FHWA/FTA letter signature page shows an incorrect date. The most recent letter was dated April 14, 2016. The initial page of the post is from 2016, however, the signature page on the post is dated April 6, 2010. The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO review this and other UPWP posted information to update as needed for accuracy and completeness.

3. **Public Participation Plan (PPP):** As it updates the PPP in 2017, the MPO should pay particular attention to the following:

   a. Ensuring that libraries are equipped with the web link or other method of providing hard copy access to the PPP to upon request. If the county libraries cannot be depended upon to share this or other MPO information, reference to them should be removed from the PPP.

   b. Providing web links to specific information that is described or summarized in the PPP. For example, information on the TIP amendment process in the PPP should also be provided or at least linked to the appropriate TIP section. In addition, the Federal Review Team recommends the TIP Amendment Process be provided in the TIP or provide a link to the relevant PPP sections. This will assist readers that want to learn more about a program or activity regardless of whether they are reading the product or the PPP.

   c. Including a distinct section on how the PPP was developed in consultation with all parties. This description is not limited to just review and commentary, but the MPO should document and describe the process by which the public, MPO partners and stakeholders helped to develop the plan.
4. **Outreach and Public Participation:** The Federal Review Team observed that the MPO appears to use the terms “public meeting” and “public hearing” interchangeably. From a federal perspective, these terms are very different. A public hearing must meet specific and more stringent requirements spelled out in law that may not apply to a public meeting. Federal law does not require the conducting of public hearings for planning activities. However, state law may dictate otherwise. Therefore, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO review and evaluate their processes and procedures to determine if a public hearing or public meeting is required/appropriate and revise language in their planning documents to reflect the interaction accordingly.

5. **Title VI and Related Requirements:** FHWA and FDOT have updated the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Sub-recipient Assurance which includes expanded contract clauses that the MPO must insert and require its contractors to insert into all contract instruments. Moreover, for consultant contracts, the MPO must also ensure that contracts include DBE Assurance Language from 49 CFR 26.13. The MPO should carefully review its procurement and contract documents, verifying that the correct nondiscrimination information is present and up to date.

6. **Long Range Transportation Plan:** The Federal Review Team recommends the MPO post the supporting LRTP technical documents which included with the hard copy of the plan, with the LRTP documents on the website.

Based on the overall findings, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the Tampa Bay Area TMA, which is comprised in part by the Pasco County MPO, substantially meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C subject to the MPO satisfactorily addressing the Corrective Actions stated in this report. The MPO is encouraged to provide FHWA and FTA with evidence of satisfactory completion of the corrective actions prior to the deadline. This certification will remain in effect until June 2021.

**Part IV: Tampa Bay TMA Regional Coordination**

The concept of regional planning for the Tampa Bay TMA has been at work on many levels for quite some time, both formally and informally. For example, the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) have been collaborating regionally on regional plans, data forecast, priorities, and public involvement since 1993. Recently integrated with TBARTA, the MPO directors, senior level staff and FDOT representatives have been meeting in the spirit of coordination and collaboration to discuss regional transportation solutions to transportation problems and to ensure a consistent planning approach among the member MPOs. The three MPOs of the TMA also collaborate via the TMA Leadership Group to focus on those transportation issues most important to the urbanized area.
Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA): TBARTA was established by Florida Legislature in July 2007 to develop and implement a regional transportation master plan covering seven counties: Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota. In addition, the MPOs participate in meetings of TBARTA’s Transit Management Committee. Over the past several years, the CCC and TBARTA have integrated their planning for the region more closely. In June 2015, TBARTA updated the Master Plan, *(Connected Region for Our Future)*, that identified freight, transit and roadway needs by 2050, with financial support from the CCC MPOs for a cost-feasible regional component.

Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC): The CCC is comprised of representatives from Polk, Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota counties. The CCC members and TBARTA staff collaborate on regional plans, data forecasts, priorities, and public involvement. The CCC annually reviews and updates priorities for major regional projects, candidates for the State’s Transportation Regional Incentive Program, and multi-use trail project priorities. The priorities are also reviewed by other TBARTA committees as part of the regional public participation process, and approved by the TBARTA board.

TMA Leadership Group: The TMA Leadership Group is an informal group consisting of three board members from each of the Tampa Bay TMA MPOs (Hillsborough, Forward Pinellas, and Pasco), and representatives of FDOT, TBARTA, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, the Hernando/Citrus MPO, and local transit agency partners and adjacent MPOs are participants in the TMA Leadership Group activities. The TMA Leadership Group, meets five times a year to develop recommendations for adoption by the boards. The TMA Leadership Group strives to speak with one voice on regional transportation priorities. The TMA Leadership Group attended a kick-off workshop for the Regional Transportation Planning and Best Practices Study with key stakeholders in the Tampa Bay region on May 12, 2017.

The MPOs also work closely and support joint efforts among regional planning partners, such as the FDOT, MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC), Tri-County Local Coordinating Board Subcommittee, Technical Review Team (TRT), Community Traffic Safety Teams (CTST), land management agencies, community redevelopment agencies, law enforcement and emergency services.

During the Tampa Bay TMA Certification Review Site Visit and Public Meetings, several representatives from partner agencies, city governments, MPO committees, and environmental and interested citizen groups spoke highly of the increased coordination and involvement of the MPOs in regional transportation planning activities and processes.
Regional Long Range Transportation Plan: The Regional Transportation Master Plan was updated in 2015. It identified regional transit, freight, and highway needs through the year 2050. The Master Plan was based on an extensive analysis of transportation demand as well as public outreach across the region. These transportation needs were identified based on a long-term vision for the region created in cooperation with FDOT, MPOs, transit agencies and the public.

The MPOs also participate in discussions with the adjacent counties and regions and the regional element and individual MPO LRTPs are supported with technical information from the Regional Transportation Analysis Technical Review Team (TRT). The TRT is coordinated by FDOT staff and includes technical representatives of the four MPOs in FDOT’s District 7 (Hillsborough, Forward Pinellas, Pasco County and Hernando/Citrus). The TRT has oversight responsibility for the periodic updates of the Tampa Bay Regional Traffic Demand Model and the Tampa Bay Urban Land Use Allocation Model within the Regional Transportation Analysis (RTA) Project. These models are subsequently used to develop the LRTP Updates of the individual MPOs and the regional transportation element of those plans.

Regional Priorities: The CCC speaks with one voice on top regional priorities. Representatives from eight counties, six MPOs and two FDOT Districts meet and determined projects to fund that are regionally significant projects under the State’s Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) that benefits regional travel.

The TMA develops regional consensus priorities across Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas counties, especially with respect to allocating federal and state funds, and makes recommendations to each MPO for consideration, public outreach, and action. This group meets approximately every other month with a professional facilitator from the Florida Consensus Center, who is sponsored by all three MPOs in proportion to their population size/grant budget.

Since the last certification review, the three MPOs coordinated regionally and have been able to leverage their resources and expand their partnering efforts. For example, the following regional projects have been undertaken:

- Howard Frankland Bridge – Bridge replacement with transit envelope and express lanes (Hillsborough/Pinellas)
- 18th Avenue Expressway – Gateway Expressway (Pinellas)
- Greenlight Pinellas – Referendum in Pinellas County for funding of more transit service and facilities (Pinellas)
- I-275 and SR 60 – Interchange modification (Hillsborough)
- I-275 from SR 60 to downtown Tampa – construct express lanes with express bus service (Hillsborough)
- Westshore Intermodal Center – Construct an intermodal center adjacent to I-275 in the Westshore area (Hillsborough)
- I-275 from Gateway Area to Howard Frankland Bridge – Construct express lanes (Pinellas)
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS): In January of 2017, a registry of regional ITS stakeholders was compiled, which will ultimately become the membership of the regional ITS working group. Members include ITS professionals from FDOT, and representatives of the six MPOs of the West Central Florida region, University of South Florida (USF) Center for Urban Transportation Research, local governments within the region, Tampa/Hillsborough County Expressway Authority (THEA), PSTA, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART), Tampa Port Authority, and Hillsborough County Aviation Authority. The primary purpose of this group is to exchange ideas, maintain lines of communication among the various stakeholders, and maintain regional consistency among ITS applications.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): For UPWP development, each CCC MPO includes a set of regional tasks in their UPWP to ensure that regional coordination continues to occur. These regional transportation planning tasks are developed jointly between the region’s MPOs and identified in the UPWPs adopted by each of the MPOs in the CCC. Each MPO dedicates a portion of its UPWP budget to support the regional tasks. Under the interlocal agreement, a lead MPO for any regional task may be designated by the group to financially administer contracts using the funds approved by the other MPOs in their UPWPs for this work.

Congestion Management Process: The Regional Congestion Management Process plan was updated in 2012. The Regional Congestion Management Process is collaboratively developed and is used to track the performance of the regional transportation system and to develop congestion management strategies on selected corridors. It also provides benchmarks to compare the area’s performance with other regions similar in size.

Regional Trails: The CCC and the Regional Multi-Use Trails Committee, consisting primarily of the region’s bicycle/pedestrian coordinators, meets as needed to develop and maintain a Regional Multi-Use Trails Plan and project priorities.

Through TBARTA’s coordination, the MPOs in the region continue to collaborate on the development and implementation of a regional Multi-Use Trails Element of the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan. This effort has led to coordinated funding requests for trail projects through the State of Florida’s Shared Use Non-motorized Trail Network (SUNTRail).

Regional Public Involvement: The CCC, through the leadership of TBARTA, is also engaged in a Regional Public Participation Plan (RP3) Working Group, which is an ad hoc committee comprised of public engagement professionals from the metropolitan planning organizations of Pinellas, Pasco, Polk, Hillsborough, Hernando/Citrus, and Sarasota/Manatee Counties. The group currently meets quarterly, or as deemed necessary by TBARTA. They provide region-oriented advice to TBARTA on effective public engagement strategies, best practices and performance measures and targets. They also assist with coordination and the provision of resources required in the development and implementation of a single regional public participation plan for the
West Central Florida region and the bi-annual Public Participation Measures of Effectiveness Report which was updated this year by TBARTA with the financial sponsorship of the Hillsborough MPO. The working group evaluates proposed goals and recommendations for the next two-year public participation period, promotes public awareness and participation in the planning and implementation of the Regional Transportation Master Plan, and helps disseminate information to local citizen groups.

**Regional Transit:** The MPOs within the TMA are also required to develop a Locally Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Plan FTA Section 5310 funding. The Tampa Bay area plan, Tri-County Area Regional Mobility Needs, is developed collaboratively by staff from the Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Pasco County MPOs. The Tri-County Area Regional Mobility Needs Plan is focused on employee-related transportation for disadvantaged citizens within the three counties. Currently, HART is leading the development of a regional transit plan for the tri-county area of Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Pasco, and the three MPOs have committed to work together through the TMA Leadership Group.
APPENDIX A – Hillsborough MPO Site Visit Participants

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**
Teresa Parker  
Lee Ann Jacobs  
Carey Shepherd  
Tameka Macon  
Doug Roberts (Desk Audit Only)

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**
Victor Austin (via conference call, filled in for Elizabeth (Parris) Orr)

**Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)**
Stephen Benson  
Roger Roscoe  
Sandra Brendanl  
Chris Speese  
Jacqueline Paramore  
Mark Reichert

**Hillsborough MPO**
Beth Alden  
Rich Clarendon  
Lynn Merenda  
Gena Torres  
Wally Blain  
Johnny Wong  
Bud Whitehead  
Greg Colangelo  
Roger Mathie  
Lisa Silva  
Allison Yeh  
Sarah McKinley  
Wade Renolds

**Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART)**
Steve Feigerbrum

**MPOAC**
Carl Mikyska
APPENDIX B - Hillsborough MPO TMA Certification Meeting Agenda

Hillsborough MPO TMA Certification Meeting Agenda

*County Center Building in*
*Downtown Tampa Manatee Rm,*
*18th Floor,*
*601 East Kennedy Boulevard,*
*Tampa, FL, 33602*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>April 11, 2017</th>
<th>Day One</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Federal Certification Team Members** | ❯ Teresa Parker (FHWA)  
❯ Lee Ann Jacobs (FHWA)  
❯ Carey Shepherd (FHWA)  
❯ Tameka, Macon (FHWA)  
❯ Parris Orr (FTA) (Joining via conference dial (813) 273-3775 and Conference ID 244108) | | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome / Introductions</td>
<td>Federal Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❯ Purpose of the Certification Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❯ Review schedule and close-out process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Discussion of Previous Review Findings</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, HART, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❯ Federal TMA Certification</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❯ State/MPO Annual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Share Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Future Needs</td>
<td>MPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>MPO Overview including changes within MPO since Last TMA Certification</td>
<td>MPO, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❯ Demographics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>❯ Boundaries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>❯ Political</td>
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<td>❯ MPO Structure</td>
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<td>❯ Process Changes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❯ Agreements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Priority Planning Activities</td>
<td>MPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>MPO Plans:</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Long Range Transportation Plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Travel Demand Forecasting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Financial Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transportation Improvement Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 p.m.</td>
<td>MPO Plans Continue:</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unified Planning Work Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Congestion Management Process</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Performance Based Planning and Programming</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Freight</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Bicycle/Pedestrian</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Transit/Transportation Disadvantaged</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Adjourn Day 1</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Wednesday, April 12, 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>MPO CAC Meeting</td>
<td>Federal MPO, HART, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Questions and follow up discussion from Day One</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Public Involvement Title IV</td>
<td>Federal MPO, FDOT, HART</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Federal MPO, MPO, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Federal MPO, MPO, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Federal MPO, MPO, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Requests for Technical Assistance and Training</td>
<td>Federal MPO, MPO, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Preliminary Findings Discussion</td>
<td>Federal Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Preliminary Findings</td>
<td>Federal Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Conclude TMA Site Visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C – Forward Pinellas Site Visit Participants

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**
Teresa Parker  
Lee Ann Jacobs  
Carey Shepherd  
Tameka Macon  
Joseph Hausman  
Doug Roberts (Desk Audit Only)

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**
Elizabeth (Parris) Orr (participated via teleconference)

**Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)**
Brian Beaty  
Alexander Gramovot  
Stephen Benson  
Elba Lopez  
Ed McKinnie

**Forward Pinellas**
Whit Blanton  
Sarah Ward  
Al Bartolotta  
Susan Miller  
Robert Feigel  
Hilary Lehman  
Sarah Caper  
Rodney Chatman  
Rebecca Stysly  
Alicia Parinello  
John Maroney-Commissioner  
Lari Johnson-Board Member  
Heather Sobush

**Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)**
John Villeneuve

**MPOAC**
Carl Mikyska
APPENDIX D – Forward Pinellas TMA Certification Meeting Agenda

310 Court Street
1st Floor Conference Room,
Clearwater FL, 33756

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome / Introductions</td>
<td>Federal Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Purpose of the Certification Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Review schedule and close-out process</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Discussion of Previous Review Findings</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Federal TMA Certification</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ State/MPO Annual Certification</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Share Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Future Needs</td>
<td>MPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>MPO Overview including changes within MPO since Last TMA Certification</td>
<td>MPO, FDOT</td>
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<td>➢ Demographics</td>
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<td>➢ Boundaries</td>
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<td>➢ Political</td>
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<td>➢ MPO Structure</td>
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<td>➢ Process Changes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Agreements</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Priority Planning Activities</td>
<td>MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Presenter</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>MPO Plans:</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Long Range Transportation Plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Travel Demand Forecasting</td>
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<td>- Financial Planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Transportation Improvement Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
<td>MPO Plans Continue:</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unified Planning Work Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Congestion Management Process</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Performance-Based Planning and Programming</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Freight</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Bicycle/ Pedestrian</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>MPO Public Meeting</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
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**Thursday, March 30, 2017**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Questions and follow up discussion from Day One</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Transit/Transportation Disadvantaged</td>
<td>Federal Team. MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Public Involvement Title VI</td>
<td>Federal Team. MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Participants</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Request for Technical Assistance and Training</td>
<td>Federal Team. MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Preliminary Findings Discussion</td>
<td>Federal Review Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Preliminary Findings</td>
<td>Federal Team. MPO, PSTA, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Adjourn TMA Site Visit</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
APPENDIX E – Pasco County MPO Site Visit Participants

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Teresa Parker
Lee Ann Jacobs
Carey Shepherd
Tameka Macon
Joseph Hausman
Doug Roberts (Desk Audit Only)

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Elizabeth (Parris) Orr (joined via teleconference)

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Brian Beaty
Stephen Benson
Alexander Gramovot

Pasco County MPO
Hughes Kristine
Jim Edwards
Manny Lajmiri
Mabel Risner
Ali Atefi
Justyna Busjewsk
Emie Monaco
Kurt Sheibel
Armstrong County

Pasco County Public Transportation
Kurt Scheirble

MPOAC
Carl Mikyska
APPENDIX F – Pasco County MPO TMA Certification Meeting Agenda

8731 Citizens Drive
Suite 320
New Port Richey FL, 34654-5598

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>March 27, 2017</th>
<th>Day One</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Federal Certification Team Members** | Teresa Parker (FHWA)  
Lee Ann Jacobs (FHWA)  
Carey Shepherd (FHWA)  
Joseph Hausman (FHWA)  
Tameka Macon (FHWA)  
Parris Orr (FTA) (joining via conference call 1-800-368-2411 Extension 7140) | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1:00 p.m. | Welcome / Introductions  
- Purpose of the Certification Process  
- Review schedule and close-out process | Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT |
| 1:15 p.m. | Discussion of Previous Review Findings  
- Federal TMA Certification  
- State/MPO Annual Certification | Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT |
| 1:45 p.m. | Share Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Future Needs | MPO |
| 2:15 p.m. | MPO Overview including changes within MPO since Last TMA Certification  
- Demographics  
- Boundaries  
- Political  
- MPO Structure  
- Process Changes  
- Agreements | MPO, FDOT |
<p>| 2:45 p.m. | Priority Planning Activities | MPO, PCPT, FDOT |
| 3:00 p.m. | Break | |
| 3:15 p.m. | Transit/Transportation Disadvantaged | Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT |
| 4:15 p.m. | Bicycle/ Pedestrian | Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>MPO Public Meeting</td>
<td>Federal Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td><strong>March 28, 2017</strong></td>
<td>Day Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Questions and follow up discussion from Day One</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>MPO Plans:</strong></td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long Range Transportation Plan</td>
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<td>▪ Travel Demand Forecasting</td>
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<td>▪ Financial Planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>MPO Plans Continue:</strong></td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unified Planning Work Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Congestion Management Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intelligent Transportation Systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Performance-Based Planning and Programming</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT</td>
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<td>Freight</td>
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<td>Security</td>
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<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Public Involvement Title</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT</td>
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<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Requests for Technical Assistance and Training</td>
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<td>2:15 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Preliminary Findings Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Federal Team</td>
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<td>2:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Preliminary Findings</td>
<td>Federal Team, MPO, PCPT, FDOT</td>
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<td>3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Adjourn TMA Site Visit</td>
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS
Review of Metropolitan Transportation Planning in Tampa Bay Region

Under federal law, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are responsible for bringing together local communities to create long-range plans and priorities for major transportation projects. In the federally-defined Tampa Bay Metropolitan Planning Area, there are three MPOs serving Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties working together to address local and regional needs. Every four years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct a review to certify that all MPOs are satisfactorily meeting the requirements for metropolitan transportation planning, as defined in federal laws and regulations.

The federal review team would like you to share thoughts on how transportation planning is conducted here.

Public Meetings will be held in each county as follows:

Pasco County MPO
Monday, March 27, 2017 @ 5:30 p.m.
at location A or map
West Pasco Government Center
BCC Board Room – 1st Floor, 5771 Citizens Drive, New Port Richey, FL 34654
For more information regarding this public meeting, please contact:
Mary Ajife – 727-899-6140 or majife@pascocountyfl.net
If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation to participate in this proceeding, you are advised, at its own risk to you, of the problem or manner of assistance. For the hearing impaired, during the meeting please contact the Customer Service Department at 727-820-2245 in New Port Richey, 33651 or 33671, or via 711 for the hearing impaired.

Forward Pinellas
Wednesday, March 29, 2017 @ 5:30 p.m.
at location B or map
Pinellas County Planning Department
290 Court Street, Clearwater, FL 33755
For more information regarding this public meeting, please contact:
Sarah Wei – 727-464-6026 or swei@forwardpinellas.org
Persons needing special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the revenue-sharing service (RES) (OPS), or the revenue-sharing service (RPS) (OPS) for the hearing impaired, may contact the Pasco County Office of Human Rights at 727-464-4098.

Hillsborough MPO
Wednesday, April 12, 2017 @ 10:00 a.m.
immediately following 9:00 a.m. Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting
at location C or map
Planning Commission Board Room
601 E Kennedy Boulevard – 10th Floor, Tampa, FL 33602
For more information regarding this public meeting, please contact:
Rob Conron – 813-273-3774 x368 or rconron@plancom.org
Persons planning to attend the public meeting in need of social accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the revenue-sharing service (OPS) (RES), or the revenue-sharing service (RPS) (OPS) for the hearing impaired, may contact the Planning Commission Office at 813-273-3774 x368 or using TTY, at least 3 business days in advance.

ForwardPinellas.org PascoMPO.net PlanHillsborough.org
727-464-8225 727-847-8140 813-273-3774 x368

The MPOs representing Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties do not discriminate in any of their programs or services.
Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, family, or religious status.
APPENDIX H: Summary of Public comments received for the Tampa TMA and responses to public comments:

The FHWA and FTA would like to thank everyone who provided comments during the public comment period for the Tampa Bay TMA Federal Certification Review. These public comments are an important element of the certification review, as they allow citizens to provide direct input on the transportation planning process for the transportation planning area. The comments received during the public meeting were complimentary, some were transit related, with the most common themes relaying a message of cooperation and coordination on the behalf of the Tampa Bay TMA staff. Additional public comments were received during the 30-day comment period either via public meeting, MPO staff and website, FHWA email, or FHWA mailing address. We have reviewed all of the comments received and have taken them into consideration throughout the writing of this report.

A Summary of the public meeting comments received during the certification review site visit public meeting is provided below, including responses offered to members of the public that had specific questions related to the planning process.

Please note: these verbal comments were recorded by a member of the Federal Review Team and may not reflect comments verbatim.

Hillsborough County MPO Public Meeting Comments and Subsequent Public Comments – April 12, 2017

Edward Mierzejewski - Over the course of my 50-year career I’ve had many opportunities to observe MPOs in action. This included three years as the Staff Director of the MPO for the Norfolk-VA Beach-Portsmouth MPO in the mid-1970s. In addition, during my 22 years at the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research, I had the opportunity to perform detailed reviews of all Florida MPO plans. During the last seven years, while I’ve been back in private consulting, I’ve had the opportunity to review numerous Hillsborough MPO planning documents. In short, the MPO does an amazing job of fulfilling the federal planning requirements, and in fact serving as a nation model of good planning practice. The MPO programs are characterized by one of the most aggressive programs of public outreach, which allows all citizens to have their voices heard. The most recent LRTP was highly innovative and has been recognized nationally for its scenario planning approach. More recently, the MPOs Vision Zero Program is demonstrating their attention to important community concerns. In short, I would say that the Hillsborough MPO is not only one of the best in Florida, but is also frequently recognized at the national level. Great job! Continue the good work. (via email April 6, 2017)

Bobby Ann Loper - Bus rider in town for 30 years. Friend said tell them that 45 must stop at spruce and sterling again. He says it takes him to long to get around. Lived here over 30 years because I have poor eye sight and can’t drive. People told me at that time that the bus system used to be fabulous. I’ve seen it gradually change and it doesn’t work as well. Things I hear about bus ridership:
- Doesn’t fit schedules
- Doesn’t go where it should go
- It’s dirty and germy
- I have a car
- I rode school bus and won’t do it again.
- I can’t understand the schedule
HART has helped with phone app and putting stuff on computer so that has helped. Sometimes someone at the stop has the app and tells the rest of us. Don’t ever get rid of the paper schedule, use it all the time. We need lots more shuttle buses and it’s totally great to just get on and go directly somewhere. Voters recognize the need but you need stories to tell the public.

My advice for those in charge is to use the bus for two weeks and try to have you have your regular lifestyle. Here are some things you’ll have to think of:

- To and from work is the usual
- Grocery shopping (no trunk to fill up)
- Can’t buy the things you need
- Don’t have the strength to take advantage of bogo specials
- Moms and baby carriages
- Weekly dry cleaning carrying or pillow case sack of laundry.
- Workers with their own equipment (window cleaners)
- Stand up the whole time where there are wheelchairs or those requiring seating
- Don’t forget you might need items people carry in their cars – sweater, bags, umbrella, books – riders have to carry everything drivers don’t think about.
- Going to and from the thrift store – donate and buy.

You see, there is all this real-life stuff that we have to do. Doctor and dentists may not be accessible depending on insurance. Take a day and try it. ‘Busticate’ your whole day. Here are some things you’ll have to do:

- Try closest stores
- Keep bus schedule in mind while shopping
- Can’t go to your choice locations without waiting so you have to be flexible

So, take two weeks of riding including weekends and you will get some great clear ideas and you can share them with our voters. Because, we need:

- More routes
- More buses
- More info

Those three things will equal more riders. You can convince voters if you can’t convince yourself. Get out of your car and get going. (applause) (via verbal comment April 12, 2017 and via FHWA mailing address April 24, 2017)

Jim Davidson - I’d like to talk about readiness to incorporate innovation into the LRTP. Thank god for the fed legislation for MPOs. Thank the MPO staff. I’ve seen seven LRTPs and read them. One thing I’ve never seen is and since we’ve been here since 77. I’ve never seen how accurate the previous LRTPs were. I recall the 2010 and 2015 plans years and years ago. The predictions were way off. Underrepresented population by 10% which has a great deal of impact. Predicting the future is very difficult, as a physician I know that.

Fed government has a great deal of ability to encourage MPOs and I would encourage recommendations to establish a subcommittee no matter where, or its own committee dealing with innovation because no one can deny this will be affecting us and if we aren’t prepared we have a financial stake in what is going to happen if we don’t plan then the Feds have to pay, we have to pay. We need to slow down. Number 2, the participation rates of our ridership studies, they are heavily populated with motivated, activated riders. That is the not the true representation, not the true makeup of the county. It is important to find out how to
get drivers better involved. There is an association of neighborhoods in Tampa and that would make a great addition to the MPO. You could have meetings on skype or other ways. Greater participations of neighborhoods in gathering input from them. It's concerning.

Lastly, the state statute that deals with innovative techniques coming up. TBX was mentioned in today's discussion of the CAC. Has the building of that been looked at from an autonomous vehicle (AV) point of view since the life expectance will be 40 to 50 years of use. What if there are mandates for AV? Has that project been studied for the inclusion of AV and other innovative technology? You won't be ready if you don’t look at it now. If you need to add two more feet to the road, now is the time to do it. Carnegie Mellon University and Texas A&M did a study on AV. We should look at HOV – the best thing to happen to transit in the future.

Let me give you a Scenario for 2030 – 12 years down road. More folks have died for texting than the war in Vietnam. Government says you can’t have cars that allow phones. What will millennials do? Addictive folks do? It might cost thousands more to get ACV, but they’ll buy them because you can phone and text inside it. Transit will increase because you can use these tools inside transit. It all goes hand in hand. If we await, it will happen without us and we’ll be reacting. Encourage the city of Tamp to get the 5G tech into its infrastructure and the state look at how to implement vehicle to vehicle, vehicle to infrastructure studies – we’d appreciate it. The Future is here and I’m encouraged by what I see. Thank God for the MPO. (via verbal comment, April 12, 2017)

Vance Arnett - I live in Channel District of Tampa. It is close to assisted living as I’ll get. I wanted to reduce my dependence on individualized transportation. For five years, both me and wife are still working. We can’t use the car more than once a week each. The rest of the time we walk and depend on PT or downtowner.

By way of disclosure I am an active CAC member. Chased that job to be caught twice. I serve on the Trans Committee for Downtown. I stay on top of safety issues and transportation issues. I worry more about pedestrian bike fatalities and sharing the road than anything else. Five things the MPO adds. They communicate. And I’m an unapologetic fan of MPO and staff. Trust is a huge issue and disconnection has never been higher than it has been.

We have examples. The past two years, the board had to listen to a disgruntled public. Before that, it was easy to forget who you are working for. Staff here, have been those folks who have remembered that mission greatly. This MPO is very good at direct input. I listen to that input monthly and it’s surprising that we don’t have more public comment today than usual. We’ve had a full room and no time there’s been so many meetings. The CAC can listen, ask question and participate. Direct input is huge and this MPO does it greatly.

Trust – outreach missions, website and every time they talk in public and their ability to recruit people who are vocal, in tune with communities. I just published a book on aging urban and wish I’d known you (first speaker). There is an adjustment public makes to make from A to B that the never made before. This MPO does a great job of listening and considering.

Incorporating reality into a conversation is something the MPO does. Process is that the answer to your question is only a phone call or email away and someone explains it to you. All the committees – whether tech or not, is a free exchange of ideas and discussions. All you have to do is sit in a meeting. It is huge, diversified and changing fast. You can only keep up by a strong MPO. The way we’ve done it we incorporate more cars. Is it on that committee by a diverse background? That is the only place it occurs unless you are at lectern. 90% of the testimony given is mostly against rather than for. Thank you for letting me speak for something. I am an unapologetic fan of MPOs, of this MPO in particular. (via verbal comment April 12, 2017)
Tracy Wisneski - The Hillsborough County MPO is doing an excellent job of focusing on the county's transportation needs. In my year on the CAC, I observed great attention to communication with the community, bringing their concerns to the MPO, organizing meetings so that interested parties could voice their opinions and ask questions and so their best to be sure that the needs of the community and groups within the community are addressed fairly. In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, other events were promoted and the promotional practices of other groups were held to a high standard to be sure that all interested parties were aware of events as much notice as possible. In my opinion, the MPO and CAC do an excellent job of representing and communicating with the community. (via MPO staff and website May 5, 2017)

Ray Chiaramonte (Hillsborough County (former MPO director) TBARTA Director) - Trying to incorporate more integration among the areas five MPOs. TBARTA merged the western chairs organization along with advisory committees but they cannot vote. That is up in Tallahassee right now and hopefully will go through. TBARTA works with all the MPO directors and meet monthly to discuss regional issues. We accomplished having a single plan for the whole region instead of having disjointed plans. Over the last few years there have been a lot more coordination for the region. I'm sure you are familiar with TMA that the three MPOs (core counties) and TBARTA sits on that board as well. Feels there is much better regional cooperation among the counties but also among the eight transit agencies. Looking to do one fare card for all transit in the region and the one bus away app that can be used by all the transition agencies to tell where the bus is. One regional technology. Not sure whether Tallahassee will change that or change the participating eight counties. They might drop us to five counties but we still want to include the three other non-core counties. (via verbal April 12, 2017)

**Forward Pinellas Public Meeting Comments – March 29, 2017**

Bill Jonson (Councilmember City of Clearwater) - Involved for so many years beginning with open houses long before I got involved as a councilmember. My comments have always been welcome though not sure how they are always sorted out. Then I was chair and vice chair from the county and it was so interesting to learn how things were going from the county side. We also have TBARTA and I was involved in their CAC and had a chance to visit to all the surrounding counties – Sarasota to Citrus. Lot of driving. As part of that I sat on the CAC to the CC Board which was how the MPOs were linked together. From that standpoint, we have a lot of closer coordination than some of the newspaper reports that you may have seen here recently. As far as a couple of experiences, I was on the PSTA Board from 2001 – 2007 and at the time there was very definite disconnect between the MPO and the transit authority. We argued back and forth over the Medicaid transit numbers. It was fixed and we had a good alignment between PSTA and the Board. If there is one disappointment, the MPO and the LRTP have incorporates as part of that the County road plan. But that is really the county's priorities as part of capital improvements and that is different than the way the MPO works. But things get moved up and moved back or moved out. (via verbal comment March 30, 2017)

John Tornga (Commissioner City of Dunedin) - In the past years there is so much opening of residents and stakeholders and visitors input but the input isn’t so revealing. The MPO knows most of it. We still ask for it and still do spotlights on big issues, so they are aware of what we are aware, but it helps to validate they are correct which keeps information from going out incorrect. Our biggest issues are if we don’t ask, it isn’t just money, it’s also projects. So, a lot of open conversation. Lot of response to in the area to make sure MPOs in the area are all tied together. They meet and it is evident they are working together. I’m real proud of what staff has done to make that happen and what the whole TMA has done to make that happen. It is a matter of us just getting the projects and being able to complete the projects. (via verbal comment March 30, 2017)

Kasy Cursey - I'm a resident of Pinellas county – safety harbor for 30 years and Taylor is also a resident of St. Pete. I sat on the advisory committee for eight years and understand how valuable the different perspectives of the advisory committee. Social media is so frustrating because it reduces the lines of communication, reduce messages, reduce attention span and space but social media does provide a lot of information. It’s a blessing our roads are busy because that gives us something to work with, but it’s a
challenge. I’m proud of this county and proud of what we are doing. That’s why I’ve been a resident for so long. (via verbal comment March 29, 2017)

**Pasco County MPO Public Meeting Comments – March 27, 2017**

**Marilyn de Chat** - Has been a CAC member for 20 years and understands the roles and responsibilities of the MPO and TBARTA and other planning related areas. This is supposed to be primarily citizen input and I’m looking around and I don’t see anyone but government (FHWA and county). It grieves me because what ultimately happens is when something hits the news then people get all excited and upset about things being dropped on them. For as long as I can remember I have been asking our county to try to figure out how to get the info out to the public out in a better form. This isn’t a dig at the MPO, they have a lot to do. I think it is the required legal advertising is not written for human consumption with the alphabet strewn throughout. I’ve been going on and on about this and Manny knows. I at a loss at how this can happen.

I keep involved in all the local media: Examples 1) Smart Transit – thank you to Senator Ballah for bringing attention to our region. TBX is another example of planners trying to push something that the neighborhoods don’t want because it will divide communities. Bay area needs more transit. I read this all the time. Whatever the Florida Highway Commission does, we need better communication on how we can do it better. (via verbal comment March 27, 2017)

**Randall Stovall** - I’m a past president of DC COC and Zephyrhills COC. I’m an east Pasco guy and I both agree and disagree with the former speaker. I don’t think it’s just communication – we get an email blast to all members and we know when they are going to be. When we have meetings that pertain to our part of the county we get a better turn out. I have recently been part of BPAC – I’ve been on it six months now. We have very responsive group trying to make bike riding safer. We do have joint BPAC meetings with the other counties and they are very productive. They help us to do more in our own areas at home. My message is upbeat. I think it’s working well but the population growth is so great that it is a challenge to keep up. There are projects that have been on the list a while but you should deal with where people are moving. We all should take responsibility for public involvement. (via verbal comment March 27, 2017)
Appendix B. Evaluation of the Measures of Effectiveness in the MPO’s Adopted Public Participation Plan (PPP) (November 2013)
January 10, 2018

Mr. Jim Wood  
Chief Planner  
Florida Department of Transportation  
605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

Dear Mr. Wood:

Over the past few months, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have worked closely with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC), and Florida’s MPOs to clearly identify and document our expectations related to meeting federal requirements for the Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) currently underway or being initiated within the next year or so. As a result of this coordination, we have developed the enclosed Federal Strategies for Implementation Requirements for LRTP Updates for the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

Please share this information with other FDOT and MPO partners as deemed appropriate. We wish to thank FDOT and MPOAC, serving as the coordinating body for MPO input, for their assistance in this effort. The input received was considered and integrated into the final document and specifically addressed in the comment response document that will be released shortly. We look forward to our continued partnership to further the transportation goals of the MPOs and FDOT during the coming years.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Karen Brunelle at (850) 553-2218 or karen.brunelle@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

FOR: James Christian, P.E.  
Division Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration

Enclosure: Federal Strategies for Implementation Requirements for LRTP Updates for the Florida MPOs

cc: Ms. Carmen Monroy, FDOT (MS-28)  
Mr. Keith Melton, FTA (Region IV)  
Mr. Carl Mikyska, MPOAC (MS-28B)  
Mr. Mark Reichert, FDOT (MS-28)
Federal Strategies for Implementing Requirements for LRTP Updates for the Florida MPOs

January 2018

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), developed this document to provide clarification to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Florida’s Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) regarding our expectations for meeting some of the requirements to be addressed in the next cycle of Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) updates. 23 CFR 450.306, 316 and 324 describe the basic requirements of the scope of the metropolitan transportation planning process, including a documented public participation plan, and development and content of the LRTPs respectively.

Addressing Current Requirements

The following information is presented to highlight notable areas for improvement, as well as those of potential concern, in order to proactively assist the MPOs in meeting federal planning requirements. These topic areas were selected based on a past history of issues observed with them through our general stewardship responsibilities, or through the oversight responsibilities via the Transportation Management Area (TMA) certification reviews. FHWA and FTA would be pleased to work with FDOT and the MPOs to discuss interpretation examples and/or statewide templates as appropriate to support implementation consistency. Additional areas of concern may be addressed on an individual MPO basis as needed throughout the LRTP development process. Citations noted refer to regulations published in the May 27, 2016 Federal Register.

Stakeholder Coordination and Input

Specific Public Involvement Strategies: MPOs are required to develop a written plan that documents and explicitly describes the procedures, strategies, and outcomes of stakeholder involvement in the planning process for all the MPOs products and processes, including, but not limited to, the timing of and timeframe for public/stakeholder input on the LRTP and its amendments. The MPOs should take the time to ensure their LRTP outreach strategies in their public participation plan (PPP), whether documented in an overall MPO PPP or one specifically for LRTP outreach, are clear, transparent, and accurately describes when and how their stakeholders can be involved in the process. To this end, having non-transportation professional(s) review the document and provide their understanding of when and how long the public comment periods occur for the various planning products can be helpful to ensure the information is being interpreted as intended. (23 CFR 450.316(a)(1))

Public Involvement/Tribal/Resource Agency Consultation: Consultation on the MPO’s planning products (including the LRTP) with the appropriate Indian Tribal governments and Federal land management agencies (when the planning area includes such lands) is required to be documented. The interaction documentation with these stakeholders needs to outline the roles, responsibilities and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies. MPOs should ensure that their plans and/or documentation include such procedures.

Additionally, State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation are required to be consulted during the development of the
LRTP. This consultation consists of comparisons of state conservation plans/maps, and inventories of natural or historical resources with transportation plans, as appropriate and if available. This consultation process is also required to be documented, ideally in the public participation plan. Note that the Tribal governments and resource agencies mentioned above are also required to be involved in the development of the various consultation processes with these agencies. {23 CFR 450.316(a)(1), (c), (d), (e); 23 CFR 450.324(g)}

**Measures of Effectiveness:** Many MPOs have what appear to be very successful strategies for reaching out and incorporating public comment into their products and processes. However, there is no systematic confirmation or validation that the strategies are indeed working. MPOs are required to periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies described within the public participation plan (PPP). The PPP is also required to contain the specific measures used, the timing of, and the process used to evaluate the MPO’s outreach and PPP strategies. Ideally, once the LRTP is developed, the outreach is evaluated, and then any needed changes to the outreach process are incorporated and documented in the PPP prior to the next LRTP update. {23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x)}

**Fiscal Constraint**

**Project Phases:** Projects in LRTPs are required to be described in enough detail to develop cost estimates in the LRTP financial plan that show how the projects will be implemented. For a project in the cost feasible plan, the phase(s) being funded and the cost must be documented. Additionally, the source of funding for each phase must be documented in the first 10 years of the LRTP. The phases to be shown in LRTPs include Preliminary Engineering (PE), Right of Way (ROW) and Construction. PE includes both the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) and Design phases. FHWA and FTA support the option of combining the PD&E and Design phases into an overall PE phase for these long range estimates. Boxed funds can be utilized as appropriate to document the financing of smaller projects, such as sidewalks, or early phases of projects, such as PD&E. However, the individual projects utilizing the box need to be listed, or at a minimum, sufficiently described in bulk in the LRTP (i.e. PD&E for projects in Years 2020-2025). {23 CFR 450.324(f)(9), (f)(11); 23 CFR 450.326(h)}

**Full Time Span of LRTP (1st 5 Years):** Plans are required to have at least a 20-year horizon. The effective date of the LRTP is the date of the MPO adoption of the plan. As such, the MPO is required to have an LRTP that includes projects from the date of adoption projected out at least 20 years from that date. The LRTP is a planning document that describes how the proposed projects will help achieve the regional vision. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), however, is a reflection of the investment priorities which are established in the LRTP. When adopting an updated LRTP, the projects in the previous LRTP are assessed and revised to acknowledge projects that have: 1) moved forward (these are typically removed from the updated LRTP), 2) shifted in time (these could be moved forward or back in implementation in the updated LRTP), and 3) been added or deleted based on the MPO’s current priorities. The TIP is only a resource for determining which projects have moved forward. **The TIP, which is based on the previous LRTP, is not a substitute for the first 5 years of the updated LRTP.** Additionally, the TIP is a 4-year programming document that, in Florida, is adopted every year and thus expires annually. When LRTPs “include the TIP”, it is a reference to a static and outdated document once the next TIP is incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which occurs annually in Florida Therefore, the MPOs will need to show all of the projects, phases, and
estimates from the adoption date through the horizon year of the LRTP, which is considered the entire time period of the LRTP. In addition, funding sources need to be shown for all projects from the adoption date through the first 10 years. {23 CFR 450.324(a); 23 CFR 450.326(a)}

**Technical Topics**

**SHSP Consistency:** We have come a long way from “What is the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)?” to having LRTPs address the safety of all users throughout the planning process. We have proactively and successfully encouraged the MPOs to include a safety element in their LRTPs and be consistent with the Florida SHSP. The changes to the planning regulations now require the goals, objectives, performance measures and targets of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), which includes the SHSP, to be integrated into the LRTPs either directly or by reference. However, the specific priorities, strategies, countermeasures and projects of the HSIP are not required to be integrated. We continue to strongly encourage their incorporation where appropriate. {23 CFR 450.306(b)(2), (d)(4)(ii); 23 CFR 324(h)}


**Freight:** Florida’s MPOs have been proactive in assessing and incorporating their freight needs. Freight shippers and providers of freight transportation services have been required to be incorporated into the stakeholder outreach that the MPO uses throughout the planning process and the LRTP to address the projected demand of goods transportation on the network. Changes to the planning requirements now also encourage the consultation of agencies and officials planning for freight movements. With the National Highway Freight Program a core funding category of federal funds, having a solid basis for incorporating freight needs and projecting the freight demands will be key to the LRTP’s success for meeting its regional vision for the goods movement throughout the area. Additionally, the planning regulations now require the goals, objectives performance measures and targets of the State Freight Plan to be integrated into the LRTPs either directly or by reference. While freight is one of the planning factors, it deserves special emphasis, and will need to play a more prominent role in future LRTPs. The MPOs need to show a concerted effort to incorporate freight stakeholders and strategies into the next LRTP. {23 CFR 450.306(b)(4), (b)(6); 23 CFR 450.316(a); 23 CFR 450.324 (b), (f)(1), (f)(5)}

**Environmental Mitigation/Consultation:** For highway projects, the LRTP must include a discussion on the types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities. The environmental mitigation discussion in the LRTP must be developed in consultation with Federal, State and Tribal wildlife, land management and regulatory agencies. The LRTP discussion can be at a system-wide level to identify areas where mitigation may be undertaken (perhaps illustrated on a map) and what kinds of mitigation strategies, policies and/or programs may be used when these environmental areas are affected by projects in the LRTP. This discussion in the LRTP would identify broader environmental mitigation needs and opportunities that individual transportation projects might take advantage of later. MPOs should be aware that the use of ETDM alone is not environmental mitigation. The use of ETDM is considered project screening and is not a system-wide review of the planning area. Documentation of the consultation with the relevant agencies should be maintained by the MPO. {23 CFR 450.324(f)(10)}
**Congestion Management Process:** The management of congestion has played an increasing role in the operations of transportation networks. One of the key activities of the process is to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies the process produces. The MPO must demonstrate that the congestion management process is incorporated into the planning process. The process the MPO uses can be documented separately or in conjunction with the LRTP. The process is required to: 1) provide for the safe and effective integrated management and operations of the transportation network; 2) identify the acceptable level of performance; 3) identify methods to monitor and evaluate performance; 4) define objectives; 5) establish a coordinated data collection program; 6) identify and evaluate strategy benefits; 7) identity an implementation schedule; and 8) periodically assess the effectiveness of the strategies. The congestion management process should result in multimodal system measures and strategies that are reflected in the LRTP and TIP. The new planning requirements provide for the optional development of a Congestion Management Plan (CMP) that includes projects and strategies that will be considered in the TIP. This optional plan is different than documenting the processes that the MPO uses to address the congestion management. The CMP, if used, needs to 1) develop regional goals, 2) identify existing transportation services and commuter programs, 3) identify proposed projects, and 4) be developed in consultation with entities that provide job access reverse commute or job-related services to low-income individuals. {23 CFR 450.322}

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plans:** Government agencies with 50 or more employees that have control over pedestrian rights of way (PROW) must have transition plans for ADA. Agencies with less than 50 employees that have control over PROW must have an ADA Program Access Plan, describing how they provide access for those with disabilities to programs, services and activities. MPOs that are a part of a public agency that has these responsibilities need to have a heightened awareness for these responsibilities and plans. However, all MPOs play an important role in ADA compliance by assisting agencies with sidewalk inventories, gap studies, etc. MPOs can also go a good deal further, but should at a minimum serve as a resource for information and technical assistance in local government compliance with ADA. {28 CFR 35.105; 28 CFR 35.150(d)}

**Administrative Topics**

**LRTP Documentation/Final Board Approval:** The date the MPO Board adopts the LRTP is the effective date of the plan. The contents of the product that the MPO adopts on that date includes at a minimum: 1) the current and projected demand of persons and goods; 2) existing and proposed facilities that serve transportation functions; 3) a description of performance measures and targets; 4) a system performance report; 5) operational and management strategies; 6) consideration of the results of the congestion management process; 7) assessment of capital investment and other strategies to preserve existing and future infrastructure; 8) transportation and transit enhancement activities; 9) description of proposed improvements in sufficient detail to develop cost estimates; 10) discussion of potential environmental mitigation strategies and areas to carry out the activities; 11) a cost feasible financial plan that demonstrates how the proposed projects can be implemented and includes system level operation and maintenance revenues and costs; and 12) pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities which are required to be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities, except where bicycle and pedestrian use are not permitted. FHWA and FTA expect that at the time the MPO Board adopts the LRTP, a
substantial amount of LRTP analysis and documentation will have been completed, and all final documentation will be available for distribution no later than 90 days after the plan’s adoption. The Board and its advisory committees, as well as the public, should have periodically had opportunities to review and comment on products from interim tasks and reports that culminated into what is referred to as the final Plan. Finalizing the LRTP and its supporting documentation is the last activity in a lengthy process. All final documents are required to be made readily available for public review and to be made available electronically. The final document(s) should be posted online and available through the MPO office no later than 90 days after adoption date. The MPOs’ schedules for this round of LRTP development are expected to allow ample time for the Board to adopt the final LRTP product no later than 5 years from the MPOs’ adoption of the previous LRTP. These adoption dates have recently been confirmed with each MPO. {23 CFR 450.324 (a), (c), (f), (k)}

LRTP & STIP/TIP Consistency: The STIP and TIPs must be consistent with the relevant LRTPs as they are developed. FHWA and FTA staff will be checking for this consistency during the STIP approval process. The results of previous reviews indicate that emphasis is still needed to ensure that projects are accurately reflected in both the TIP and STIP and that these projects are flowing from and are found to be consistent with the MPO’s LRTP. Additionally, when amendments to the STIP/TIP are made, the projects must also be consistent with the LRTP from which they are derived. When STIP/TIP amendments are received by FHWA and FTA, they will be reviewed for consistency with the applicable LRTP. Projects with inconsistencies between the STIP/TIP and the respective LRTP will not be approved for use of federal funds or federal action until the issue is addressed. {23 CFR 450.330; 23 CFR 450.218(b)}.

New Requirements
This section describes topics that may not currently be required by federal laws and rules to be addressed in LRTPs. As such, MPOs are not required to include these considerations in their current planning processes and plans. However, they will be required to be addressed for the next LRTP.

New Planning Factors: The MPO is required to address several planning factors as a part of its planning processes. The degree of consideration and analysis of the factors should be based on the scale and complexity of the area’s issues and will vary depending on the unique conditions of the area. Efforts should be made to think through and carefully consider how to address each factor. There are two new planning factors that need to be considered in the next LRTPs: 1) improving the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reducing or mitigating stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and 2) enhancing travel and tourism. Florida has a strong history of proactively addressing these transportation areas. These experiences can be drawn upon to incorporate the new factors into the planning processes. {23 CFR 450.306(b)9, (b)(10), (c)}

Transportation Performance Management: As funding for transportation capacity projects becomes more limited, increasing emphasis will be placed on maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of our current transportation system and the resources that build and maintain the system. As such, a performance-based approach to transportation decision making will be required for the FDOT and MPOs. As the MPOs and FDOT are aware, the performance measures required to be addressed in the LRTPs are documented in final rules that were published in the Federal Register on March 15, 2016 and January 18, 2017. The MPOs will set their targets
in accordance with the schedule established in these final rules. FDOT and the MPOs have flexibility as to the
documentation and process used for setting the targets, as long as the targets are made publicly available once
they are set. The next LRTPs (when updated or amended after May 27, 2018) will be required to describe the
performance measures and the targets the MPO has selected for assessing the performance of the
transportation system.

A system performance report will also be required to be included in the LRTPs. The report is a tool that
evaluates and updates the condition of the transportation system in relation to the performance measures and
targets. While guidance is still being developed, the report would include for each performance measure
information such as: the target set; the baseline condition at the start of the evaluation cycle; the progress
achieved in meeting the targets; and a trend-type comparison of progress with previous performance reports.
Depending on the timing of the LRTP, the date of the target setting, and length of the evaluation cycle, the LRTPs
initially amended/updated after May 27, 2018 may not have a full cycle of specific information to include.
However, the LRTPs need to include the data that is available and discuss how the MPO plans to use the full
information once it does become available. We recognize that these initial LRTPs will be developed during a
transition period, and commit to working with the MPOs to ensure that the regulations are reasonably being
addressed. {23 CFR 450.306(d)(4); 23 CFR 450.324(f)(3), (f)(4)}

For more TPM information and the tools tailored for Florida partners, please go to:
https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fldiv/tpm.cfm

Multimodal Feasibility: The transportation plan shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions
that provide for the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system (including accessible
pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people
and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand. {23 CFR 450.324}

Transit Asset Management: The MPO is required to set performance targets for each performance measure, per
23 CFR 450.306(d). Those performance targets must be established 180 days after the transit agency established
their performance targets. Transit agencies are required to set their performance targets by January 1, 2017. If
there are multiple asset classes offered in the metropolitan planning area, the MPO should set targets for each
asset class. Planning for TAM/Roles and Responsibilities for MPOs and State DOTs can be found on the FTA

**Emerging Issues**

This section describes topics that may not currently be required by federal laws and rules to be addressed in
LRTPs. As such, MPOs are not required to include these considerations in their current planning processes and
plans. These issues are receiving considerable attention in national discussions. Each MPO has the discretion to
determine whether to address these emerging topics in their LRTP at this time and the appropriate level of
detail. Beginning to address these issues early on may potentially minimize the level of effort needed to achieve
future compliance.
**Mobility on Demand (MOD):** Mobility on Demand (MOD) is an innovative, user-focused approach which leverages emerging mobility services, integrated transit networks and operations, real-time data, connected travelers, and cooperative Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to allow for a more traveler-centric, transportation system- of-systems approach, providing improved mobility options to all travelers and users of the system in an efficient and safe manner. Automated vehicles (AV), now being called Automated Driving Systems (ADS) and Connected Vehicles (CV) are two components of the overall MOD model.

ADS (also known as self-driving, driverless, or robotic) are vehicles in which some aspect of vehicle control is automated by the car. For example, adaptive cruise control, where the vehicle automatically speeds up, slows down, or stops in response to other vehicle movements in the traffic stream is an automated vehicle function. Connectivity is an important input to realizing the full potential benefits and broad-scale implementation of automated vehicles. The preliminary five-part formal classification system for ADS is:

- **Level 0:** The human driver is in complete control of all functions of the car.
- **Level 1:** A single vehicle function is automated.
- **Level 2:** More than one function is automated at the same time (e.g., steering and acceleration), but the driver must remain constantly attentive.
- **Level 3:** The driving functions are sufficiently automated that the driver can safely engage in other activities.
- **Level 4:** The car can drive itself without a human driver

CV includes technology that will enable cars, buses, trucks, trains, roads and other infrastructure, and our smartphones and other devices to “talk” to one another. Cars on the highway, for example, would use short-range radio signals to communicate with each other so every vehicle on the road would be aware of where other nearby vehicles are. Drivers would receive notifications and alerts of dangerous situations, such as someone about to run a red light as they’re nearing an intersection or an oncoming car, out of sight beyond a curve, swerving into their lane to avoid an object on the road.

Rapid advances in technology mean that these types of systems may be coming on line during the horizon of the next LRTPs. While these technologies when fully implemented will provide more opportunities to operate the transportation system better, the infrastructure needed to do so and the transition time for implementation is an area that the MPO can start to address in this next round of LRTP updates.

**Resources for additional information:**
- **Mobility on Demand:** https://www.its.dot.gov/factsheets/pdf/MobilityonDemand.pdf
- **Connected Vehicles:** https://www.its.dot.gov/cv Basics/index.htm
- **Transportation Planning Capacity Building Connected Vehicle Focus Area:**
  https://planning.dot.gov/focus_connectedVehicle.asp
**Proactive Improvements**

This section describes topics that are not currently required by federal laws and rules to be addressed in LRTPs nor are they required by the May 27, 2016 regulation changes. As such, MPOs are not required to include these considerations in their current planning processes and plans. These areas are intended to be a proactive change in the LRTPs to help Florida continue to make positive strides in long range planning.

**New Consultation:** There are two new types of agencies that the MPO should consult with when developing the LRTPs: agencies that are responsible for tourism and those that are responsible for natural disaster risk reduction. These consultations are a natural evolution of implementing the new planning factors for which Florida has experience in doing. {23 CFR 450.316(b)}

**Summary of Public Involvement Strategies:** Seeking out and considering the needs of traditionally underserved populations is a key part of any public involvement process. When the MPO carries out stakeholder involvement, they may use a variety of strategies. These strategies ultimately demonstrate that their planning process is consistent with Title VI and other federal anti-discrimination provisions in the development of the LRTP. In order to clearly demonstrate this consistency, the MPOs should summarize the outreach information. This information should be derived from the MPO's public involvement plan elements. The public involvement summary should be supported by more detailed information, such as the specific strategies used, feedback received and feedback responses, findings, etc. The detailed information should then be referenced and included in the form of a technical memorandum or report that can be appended to the LRTP, or included in a separate, standalone document that is also available for public review in support of the LRTP. {23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii)}

**Impact Analysis/Data Validation:** In accordance with Title VI, MPOs need to have and document a proactive, effective public involvement process that includes outreach to low income, minorities and traditionally underserved populations, as well as all other citizens of the metropolitan area, throughout the transportation planning process. Using this process, the LRTP needs to document the overall transportation needs of the metropolitan area and be able to demonstrate how public feedback and input helped shape the resulting plan. Where some MPOs struggle in using data to assess likely impacts, other MPOs attempt to use data to assess the needs. Some look at a dollar spread among minority/non-minority areas to determine equity. This approach is probably not the best method to use, since higher dollar amounts might indicate capacity projects when the community needs more pedestrian connectivity, for example. We suggest using the data tools found at [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/resources/data_tools/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/resources/data_tools/). Additionally, as time passes it becomes more important to validate the 2010 census data being used. School Boards, emergency service agencies, tax rolls and staff knowledge are all good sources to ensure data quality. {23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii); 23 CFR 420.324(e)}

**FDOT Revenue Forecast:** To help stakeholders understand the financial information and analysis that goes into identifying the revenues for the MPO, we recommend the MPO include FDOT’s Revenue Forecast in the appendices that support the LRTP. {23 CFR 450.324(f)(11)(ii)}
**Sustainability and Livability in Context:** We encourage the MPO to implement strategies that contribute to comprehensive livability programs and advance projects with multimodal connectivity. MPO policies and practices that support an integrated surface transportation system for all users that is efficient, equitable, safe, and environmentally sustainable will improve transportation choices and connectivity for all users especially those walking and bicycling. Building partnerships with traditional and nontraditional stakeholders will facilitate the development and implementation of transportation projects that improve integration, connectivity, accessibility, safety and convenience for all users. The MPOs are encouraged to identify and suggest contextual solutions for appropriate transportation corridors within their area and utilize the flexibilities provided in the federal funding programs to improve the transportation network for all users. (23 CFR 450.306(b))

**Scenario Planning:** The new planning requirements describe using multiple scenarios for consideration by the MPO in the development of the LRTP. If the MPO chooses to develop these scenarios, they are encouraged to consider a number of factors including potential regional investment strategies, assumed distribution of population and employment, a scenario that maintains baseline conditions for identified performance measures, a scenario that improves the baseline conditions, revenue constrained scenarios, and include estimated costs and potential revenue available to support each scenario. (23 CFR 450.324(i))
Appendix C. LRTP Expectations: Federal Strategies for Implementing Requirements for LRTP Update for Florida
Florida Planning Emphasis Areas-2018

The Florida Department of Transportation Office of Policy Planning develops Planning Emphasis Areas on a two-year cycle in coordination with the development of Metropolitan Planning Organizations’ respective unified planning work programs. Emphasis areas set planning priorities, support the Florida Transportation Plan, and give importance to topic areas which MPOs are encouraged to address as they develop their planning programs. Implementation of the seven goals of the Florida Transportation Plan requires embracing innovation; extensive collaboration across jurisdictions, modes and disciplines; an emphasis on customer service; data and performance feedback; and strategic investments for the efficient and effective allocation of resources.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations should consider the following topics when updating their Unified Planning Work Plan.

Rural Transportation Planning

MAP-21 defined the structure and responsibilities of designated regional transportation planning organizations in federal regulations for the first time. Florida Statutes include several provisions that require coordination with local governments including those in rural areas. Some rural communities in Florida face significant development pressures and need transportation investments to handle growing populations and economic activities. Others simply struggle to maintain their existing transportation system and with providing services to a spread-out community. MPOs are encouraged to plan for and coordinate with rural governmental entities both within their planning boundaries as well as those areas outside of the current boundaries that are impacted by transportation movements between regions.

Transportation Performance Measures

FHWA has finalized six interrelated performance rules to implement the transportation performance measures framework established by MAP-21 and the FAST Act. Collectively, the rules address challenges facing the transportation system, including: improving safety, maintaining the condition of the infrastructure, reducing traffic congestions, improving the efficiency of the system and freight movement, protecting the environment, and reducing delays in project delivery. The rules established national performance measures. State DOTs and MPOs must establish targets for each measure. Planning documents will identify the strategies and investments used to reach the targets. Progress towards meeting the targets will be reported through new and existing mechanisms. MPOs need to account in their UPWP for the effort necessary to satisfy the federal requirements. As MPOs and Florida DOT venture into this first round of target setting and adopting performance measures into our planning products, more emphasis will be placed on this topic area. The cooperative efforts of Florida’s MPOs and DOT to insure this new planning tool will be effective and well-coordinated will need to be shown in the upcoming UPWPs.
ACES (Automated/Connected/Electric/Shared-use) Vehicles

According to the Federal Highway Administration, “Transportation is in the midst of disruptive change from new technologies (automated and connected vehicles); new institutions (shared mobility firms); and changing attitudes (reduced car ownership). Across the nation, transportation planners are under pressure to develop performance-oriented policies, plans, and investment decisions that consider an increasingly complex transportation landscape. In the process, planners need to consider, but cannot yet reliably predict, the potential impact of disruptive and transformational Connected Vehicle (CV) and Automated Vehicle (AV) technologies on safety, vehicle ownership, road capacity, VMT, land-use, roadway design, future investment demands, and economic development, among others. While some forms of CV and AV are already being deployed across the United States, significant unknowns exist regarding the rate of technology adoption, which types of technologies will prevail in the marketplace, the interaction between CV/AV vehicles and various forms of shared mobility services, and the impacts of interim and widespread levels of CV/AV usage.”

Adopting and supporting innovative technologies and business practices supports all seven goals of the Florida Transportation Plan and the federal planning factors found in the FAST Act. ACES may lead to great improvements in safety, transportation choices, and quality of life for Floridians, our visitors and the Florida economy. Though there is a great deal of speculation and uncertainty of the potential impacts these technologies will have, MPOs need to determine how best to address the challenges and opportunities presented to them by ACES vehicles.

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