

Hernando County MPO



**2011
*FDOT and MPO Joint Certification Review
Questions and Answers***

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2011 Responses to FDOT and MPO Joint Certification Questions

Section (1): The metropolitan planning requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303

PLANNING PROCESS

- 1. Is there a need to update existing agreements to more closely conform to regulatory requirements or to represent the planning process in practice more accurately? If yes please explain.**

Response: No.

- 2. Describe the voting structure of the MPO Board and the MPO committees?**

Response: The voting structure of the MPO and its committees (Technical Advisory Committee, Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, and Transportation Systems Operations Committee) is one vote per voting member. Being that the MPO Board has an even number (six) of voting members, the chairperson only votes to break a tie vote. To allow for an appropriate level of input, the City of Brooksville representative cannot function as the MPO Chairperson.

The West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) also functions with one vote per voting member.

- 3. How are bicycle and pedestrian planning activities being integrated in the transportation planning process? Does the MPO have a bicycle and pedestrian plan? Is it a standalone plan?**

Response: The LRTP recommends specific bicycle and pedestrian priorities and funding allocations. The priorities are identified from updated data and analysis, application of evaluation criteria, and receipt of public input into the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans. The MPO's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee acts as the steering group for those Plan updates. The BPAC makes its recommendations to the MPO Board.

- 4. How often is the CMP reviewed and what is the product of the update?**

Response: The last comprehensive update of the CMP was in 2009. In 2010, the MPO conducted its CMP Annual Update which inventoried the multi-modal transportation system, presented selected operational analyses and key system performance measures, and provided focused corridor enhancements.

- 5. Who implements CMP strategies (e.g., State DOT, transportation management associations, transit agencies, locals)?**

Response: CMP recommendations can be implemented by any agency or jurisdiction that implements transportation improvements. For example, bicycle lane signing and marking were recently approved by FDOT as part of a resurfacing project along Broad Street in Brooksville. In several cases Hernando County has implemented intersection

improvements or other operational improvements identified in the CMP (formerly known as the Congestion/Mobility Management System).

6. How are ITS activities coordinated in the MPO/TMA?

Response: The regional ITS architecture is used by the two implementing agencies in Hernando County; Hernando County Transportation Services (formerly the Department of Public Works) and the City of Brooksville. The MPO coordinates its planning process with the ITS programs of these implementing agencies.

7. What process does the MPO use to identify and analyze existing and projected goods movement in the region?

Response: The MPO's CMP, mainly through the efforts of the Transportation Systems Operations Committee (TSOC), identifies areas of concern related to the movement of heavy trucks. Additionally, the TSOC regularly reports on goods movement issues through its representative from the trucking industry. The county's Manager of Economic Development, also a TSOC member, provides input on activity related to the Airport Industrial Park and to rail cargo. The TSOC allows coordination between the goods movement community and public agency planning/engineering staffs. To assist the process, characteristics of the goods movement system are maintained in the MPO's transportation database.

Existing and future goods movement considerations are also addressed through the LRTP development process. The 2035 LRTP documents short and long-term strategies to facilitate the movement of heavy trucks and limit disruption to the community and to reduce vehicular conflict. Regional goods movement strategies are developed through FDOT's ongoing Regional Goods Movement Study, and its Advisory Committee in which MPO staff participates.

8. How does the MPO explore the need for enhanced intermodal connectivity by identifying major facilities serving air, rail, transit, and freight and demonstrating the linkages between these modes?

Response: Much of the need for intermodal connectivity related to freight has been identified through the evolution of the FDOT's Tampa Bay Regional Goods Movement Study, and also by TBARTA through its draft Master Plan Update which includes a freight element. These studies identified freight activity centers, regional freight mobility corridors, designated truck routes, rail corridors, etc. One of the most useful parts of the study was the identification of "Hot Spots" which were specific locations, identified by the members of the goods movement industry, that were in need of transportation improvements in order to enhance the movement of goods. The MPO uses this list of problem areas in its prioritization of transportation projects during the development of its TIP. Proposed projects that include improvements to one or more hot spots are given a higher priority.

It is noted that the Hernando County Airport is a general aviation facility that is not envisioned to provide scheduled passenger service. Similarly, railroad service is currently oriented toward bulk and container freight transport, with no anticipated near term passenger service.

9. **What safety databases and variables (e.g., fatalities, serious injuries, crash rates, crash hot spots, collision inventories, pedestrian injuries, behavior statistics, driver's age, location, GIS, roadway inventory data, etc.) do you consider in the planning process and how is the data used?**

Response: The MPO has found that vehicle crash statistics are good indicators of operational problems within the highway network, some of which are correctable through roadway improvement (either capacity or design related), through operational improvements such as intersection design, signalization, or enhanced enforcement activity.

The Hernando County Engineering Division compiles updated lists of the 20 highest vehicle crash locations in Hernando County. For comparative purposes, a three year trend analysis is produced for each update of the CMP. Also, MPO and engineering staff actively participate in FDOT's monthly Hernando/Citrus Community Traffic Safety Team meetings.

10. **Have you tested your COOP?**

- **What, if any, changes were made to the COOP based on your test(s)?**
- **If your COOP has not been tested, are there plans to test it? (please explain)**

Response: A table top exercise is programmed to occur in July 2011.

11. **Is the MPO participating in any security studies, reviews, or updates with their freight or transportation providers (such as transit, seaports, rail, airports)? If so, please explain.**

Response: The MPO has participated in the Tampa Bay Regional Goods Movement Study and in the TBARTA Master Plan Update. The status of the fixed-route transit system is updated annually through the Transit Development Plan (TDP) update. The Hernando County Airport manager is a member of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and conveys security, operations and Airport Master Plan update information in this forum.

12. **To what degree have jurisdictions within the TMA adopted climate change mitigation or greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals or plans?**

- **Does the MPO coordinate any activities or plans of the local member jurisdictions relating to reducing GHGs through the transportation planning process?**
- **Does the MPO have a regional GHG reduction goal or is this being considered? If so, is this effort coordinated with other entities?**
- **Does the transportation planning process consider affordable housing plans or involve agencies/organizations responsible for identifying or addressing housing needs and options?**

Response: The MPO is not currently within a TMA. The MPO coordinates with the CCC and the District on GHG related issues.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

- 1. How are State programs, policies, and processes (such as the SIS, FIHS, other modal/master plans) integrated into the LRTP and TIP development process?**

Response: The development of the LRTP is coordinated with the State's long-range SIS/FIHS Plan. Funding for improvements to the SIS/FIHS are identified by FDOT and incorporated into the Cost Feasible portion of the LRTP and into the TIP, through annual updates to the FDOT Work Program.

- 2. During the last update of the Transportation Plan, how were the planning assumptions validated?**

Response: The LRTP is a need's based plan with population, employment, travel characteristic and technology/infrastructure assumptions. Through a cooperative process, local, regional and statewide control totals are utilized. Also, travel characteristic and technology/infrastructure baseline assumptions are established. The plan assumptions are tested and verified iteratively through:

- the RTA modeling process,
- Public and policy level review,
- The use of financial tools and analysis provided by the MPO's consultant,
- Assumptions are refined and updated during the plan development process.

- 3. What financial assumptions are being used in the development of the Transportation Plan? (Discussion should include anticipated bond revenue, future tax referendums, anticipated/current sales-tax referendums, as well as assumptions based on failed attempts to generate revenue.)**

Response: The MPO's 2035 Cost Affordable Long Range Transportation Plan update will continue to rely on two main funding sources, as follows:

The adopted LRTP Cost Affordable Plan is funded primarily with transportation impact fee revenues and developer contributions. Hernando County does not use gas tax revenues for costs associated with roadway maintenance and operations and does not currently apply gas tax revenues towards roadway capital projects. Details of these funding proposals follow:

- Revenues generated by the transportation impact fee program are a main source of funding for the County's adopted Cost Affordable Roadway Plan. Future transportation impact fee revenues are projected using ten years of historical building permit data.
- Developer contributions are also a primary resource for developer-built roadways and associated right-of-way dedications.
- While the county continues to apply ninth-cent and 1st LOGT revenues towards roadway maintenance and operations, the county currently has imposed only two of the maximum five cents of the 2nd LOGT, which also is currently used to fund the roadway maintenance program.

4. How are cost estimates developed?

Response: The cost and revenue estimates are provided by each transportation implementing agency or jurisdiction. Using a spreadsheet specifically developed for the LRTP Update, each implementing entity is asked to project their revenues available for transportation purposes in 5-year increments to 2035, the horizon year of the plan update. They are also asked to identify the portion of these revenues that are needed for ongoing operations and maintenance of the transportation system under their control. The remainder, if any is then available for capacity enhancements to the transportation system. The revenue estimates are generally on the conservative side.

The revenue and cost information is requested in current year dollars and are adjusted to “year of expenditure” based on factors provided by FDOT.

5. Describe how the validity of the original assumptions used in the LRTP are reviewed for any updates to the LRTP?

With respect to updates of the adopted LRTP, revenue assumptions made during the prior Cost Affordable Plan will be revisited, particularly in light of the recent economic downturn. These assumptions include transportation impact fee levels, and the imposition of local option gas taxes, and private sector initiative. Also see the response to LRTP question # 2 on page 3.

6. Does the plan have a regional coordination element? If so, how does the plan take into account regional/state priorities, and give emphasis to facilities serving important national or regional transportation functions?

Response: Yes, the plan has a regional coordination element. The State of Florida has designated the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) that includes transportation facilities and services that provide for regional and statewide mobility of people and goods. This system is included as part of the CCC regional network and is used in the development of the Regional LRTP. Because of dedicated funding for this system, projects on the SIS are coordinated at a regional level and included in the MPO’s LRTP and TIP.

Specifically, in the MPO’s LRTP, projects are prioritized using 10 distinct criteria. One criterion that is used deals with regional connectivity, that is, does the proposed project impact an inter-urban route between activity centers.

Development of the 2035 LRTP update was closely coordinated with the State’s long-range SIS/FIHS Plan. Funding for improvements to the SIS/FIHS were identified by FDOT and incorporated into the Cost Feasible portion of the LRTP and into the TIP, through annual updates to the FDOT Work Program.

7. To what extent does your MPO use Context Sensitive Solutions in the transportation planning process? Please provide examples of projects/plans where a direct consideration for “context sensitive solutions” was used.

Response: During the last several LRTP updates, the MPO has conducted consensus building workshops. The composition of participants in these workshops was intentionally broad based, including a representative cross-section of the communities

within the county. In the development of other plans such as the TDP, community based workshops and meetings are also conducted.

All of the standing MPO committees (CAC, TAC, BPAC, and TSOC) are also typically engaged in the plan development process. All MPO activity and information is posted on the MPO website, which is LEP compliant. Currently, the MPO is working with Hernando County to engage in social network forums.

TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING

1. Who is responsible for travel demand forecasting at the MPO?

Response: Dennis Dix, MPO Coordinator.

If another governmental agency provides required modeling expertise, please detail whether or not there is a formal memorandum of agreement between the agencies to delineate technical responsibilities, lines of communication and nature of review.

Response: Since 1991, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Model (TBRPM) has been the official travel demand model structure for FDOT District 7. The regional model includes five counties and has been developed and maintained through a coordinated process involving state and local transportation and planning agencies. While there is not a formal MOA, the technical process is duly institutionalized in the District.

The MPO is a member of a technical advisory body referred to as the Technical Review Team (TRT) that is part of an overall process for regional transportation planning in the Tampa Bay area. 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, Sarasota/Manatee MPO, and other interested transportation agencies. The TRT meets bi-weekly and members provide input and review for overall technical guidance of the forecasting process. In addition, the members keep their respective bodies informed of the progress, results and decisions of this group.

2. If contractors perform all travel model development:

- **Who, if anyone, on the MPO staff is responsible for evaluating the technical work of the contractor?**

Response: Dennis Dix, MPO Coordinator, has direct oversight of this activity.

- **If in-house staff actively participates in model development and application, what formal training has the MPO technical staff received in travel demand forecasting?**

Response: Dennis Dix, MPO Coordinator, has received basic, intermediate and executive update training from FDOT with FSUTMS and the TBRPM.

- **Does the MPO technical staff require training in specific technical areas?**

Response: Training for model version updates is necessary.

3. How does the MPO engage their board and committees in the development, review, and oversight of the forecasting process?

Response: The MPO Board and its committees (TAC, CAC, BPAC, and TSOC) are actively engaged at all substantive technical and policy level decision making points in the modeling process.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

1. How are bicycle, pedestrian, and transit needs addressed in the prioritization process?

Response: The LRTP contains specific bicycle/pedestrian and transit project priorities and funding allocations. The priorities are identified from updated data and analysis, application of evaluation criteria, and receipt of public input. The MPO's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee acts as the steering group for the Transportation Improvement Plan's Enhancement Project Priority List updates. The BPAC makes its recommendations to the MPO Board. The Transit Technical Committee functions as the steering group on transit projects and their priorities.

2. What is the process for modifying / amending the Transportation Improvement Plan (please provide details about the steps taken for both)?

Response: An administrative modification is a minor revision to a TIP that includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects and minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates. An administrative modification does not require public review and comment, remonstrations of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination, if applicable [23CFR 450.104].

The TIP requires a formal amendment if any of the following criteria are met:

1. The change adds new individual projects to the current TIP/STIP;
2. The change affects air quality conformity;
3. The change adversely impacts financial constraint, including cost estimate increases;
4. The change results in major scope changes; and/or,
5. The change removes or deletes an individually listed project from the TIP/STIP

• **How are changes documented?**

Response: Amendments are presented to the MPO Board as well as the MPO's advisory committees. At these meetings, information on the amendment is presented. The FDOT, the MPO and federal liaisons have developed a form documenting the requested change to the TIP cooperatively. The MPO, FDOT, and Federal Agency with oversight (FHWA or FTA) must all sign off on the form.

• **How is the public made aware of changes to the plan?**

Response: MPO documents are made available through the following means:

- Posting on the MPO website (www.hernandocounty.us/mpo)
- On-demand document translation service for web posted documents is now available via a contracted translation service
- Posting on the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee website (www.regionaltransportation.org)
- Advertising in local print media
- Press Releases/ Public Service Announcements
- Email and Direct Mail Promotion
- Handouts/ Brochures/ Flyers/ Newspaper Inserts
- MPO meetings, along with Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board meetings, broadcast live and rebroadcast on HCGB 622; HCGB 622 Close Caption records are kept online on the HTV website
- Social media mechanisms are being added to the process

TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED

- 1. What performance data is needed from transit operators to support MPO activities? How do the transit providers share this data with the MPO?**

Response: The MPO contractually obligates the transit operator and the CTC to provide monthly operating reports which contain the following data: hours of service, revenue service hours and miles, total number of passenger trips provided by mode and program, cost per trip by mode and program, number of incidents, and route disruptions.

- 2. What are the major issues, needs and priorities currently facing the region's transit operator(s)?**

Response: Consistent and reliable local revenue with which to match transit operating costs.

What particular concerns have the operators identified in their planning processes?

Response: Sufficient and reliable near term and long range funding are the overriding concerns.

What is the MPO's role in addressing these issues, needs, and priorities?

Response: The MPO develops the Transit Element of the LRTP. This provides the long term guidance for the 10 year TDP and for the 5 year TIP. The Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board's TDSP is updated annually.

The TBARTA Board and its Transit Management Committee (TMC), Land Use Working Group (LUWG) and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) serve to foster regional, adjacent jurisdiction and transit agency level discussion, interaction and coordination on the issues, needs and priorities of urban and rural transit systems.

- 3. How does the MPO assist in development of the TDP?**

Response: The MPO produces the TDP.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

1. How are the State, public transit agencies and MPO subcommittees involved in UPWP development?

Response: The draft and final UPWP document is distributed to MPO partners according to guidelines established in the MPO Program Management Handbook - Figure 3-D: Distribution of the Draft and Final UPWPs. The UPWP review process is as follows:

- The UPWP requires a 30-day public review and comment period.
- The UPWP Draft will be available by March 15th for transmittal to FDOT, DCA, and the Florida Clearinghouse.
- The UPWP Draft is posted on the MPO website under “Draft Publications” and is available in the BOCC Library for public review during regular business hours at least 30 days prior to MPO consideration.
- Formal presentations to the MPO advisory committees (CAC, TAC) as an Action Item on the Agenda for review and comment before the MPO Board considers adoption.
- The UPWP is adopted by the MPO Board following an advertised public hearing.
- In-person public comment is accepted at each MPO Board and advisory committee meeting.

2. Specifically how does the MPO collaborate with the transit operator in development of the funding aspect of the Unified Planning Work Program?

Response: Although transit operations are contracted, from a funding and operations policy perspective, the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners is the 'transit operator.' The MPO, which is staffed by Hernando County Planning Department employees, is responsible for transit related planning. All five County Commissioners, plus a City of Brooksville councilperson, and the FDOT District Secretary populate the MPO Board.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

1. How does the public involvement process address the principles of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each state?

Response: The MPO has been and continues to be fully compliant with federal and state requirements pertaining to public participation, including: §450.316, §450.322, §450.324, and §450.326 in Chapter 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Limited English Proficiency Executive Order 13166; Florida Statute 339.175; and The Sunshine Law. It is the intent of the MPO that all citizens in Hernando County be given the opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process, including low income individuals, the elderly, persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. The Public Involvement Process and the Limited English Proficiency Plan outlines the MPO's policies and procedures with regard to every aspect of the public participation process.

The MPO recognizes and values the diversity within the county. It also recognizes the importance of including those individuals and groups who have been traditionally underserved. Workshops and other events will occur at various locations and times throughout Hernando County to give people a variety of participation opportunities. All MPO public meetings and formal events are held in facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities. In Florida, every person has been granted the Constitutional right to inspect or copy any public record, with some exceptions, at both the state and local levels. The Sunshine Law governs all meetings of the MPO Board, advisory committees and subcommittees. This assures accountability and a transportation planning process that is transparent and fully accessible.

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language AND who have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English must be included in the MPO transportation planning process. Therefore, executive summaries for key documents will be made available in Spanish and may be presented in alternative formats, such as brochures or newsletters.

Though interpreter services will be made available free of charge, to include Spanish and sign language, upon request made at least ten business days prior to MPO Board and committee meetings, workshops, or other events, the MPO will make every effort to provide these services with three business days notice. These and other special accommodations can be made, including transportation to MPO meetings and events for those who qualify as transportation disadvantaged, by contacting Alice Gura, County Administration, at (352) 540-6452, or by emailing aliceg@hernandocounty.us at least three business days in advance.

In order to identify areas in which to focus the MPO's efforts, re: Environmental Justice and Title VI, Year 2010 Census data will be utilized to pinpoint census block groups with high levels of low-income, minority, and elderly (65+) populations. The MPO will then hold several Environmental Justice Workshops, either during development of the 2035 LRTP, or during updates to the Transit Development Plan.

2. How does the MPO's public involvement process identify and address the needs of those who have been traditionally underserved, including low-income and minority households?

Response: In addition to the process cited above, locations of minority and low-income populations are identified using data from the Census and from human service agencies. The Hernando County Planning Department assists in identifying neighborhood organizations located in these areas. A similar technique is used to identify neighborhood organizations in the areas of major transportation projects.

Since 2003, the MPO has maintained a database of these community groups and contact names, for use in outreach efforts at all planning levels. Having contacts readily accessible eases distribution of outreach material such as newsletters, corridor specific brochures, and transportation related announcements. In the event a specific transportation project in a community is best served by speaking at established neighborhood meetings, the updated contacts assist in the arrangement of presentations. In addition, the MPO anticipates that the Efficient Transportation Decision Making process will build on community input obtained in systems planning and

provide information to implementing agencies as projects advance into programming, corridor planning and design.

The MPO will continue to offer a multitude of mechanisms with which to access information and respond, so that people who are unable to attend meetings will be able to participate in the process. Utilizing the data from the above, and adhering to Environmental Justice and Title VI principles, the MPO will be able to respond more effectively to the concerns of these residents. Efforts will be taken to include the comments and concerns from these residents as an integral part of the process.

3. How was the public involvement program developed and who participated in its development?

Response: MPO staff developed this program with input from the Citizens Advisory Committee.

4. How is adequate public notice of public involvement activities and opportunities for public review provided at key decision points including but not limited to approval of Transportation Plans and TIPs?

Response: The MPO holds a fully advertised public hearing forum prior to adoption of all transportation-related plans, documents, programs, and grant applications. Public hearings are also held prior to taking formal policy actions on matters of specific interest to the community and on other topics of importance. This procedure is to ensure ample public involvement and access to the planning process and to ensure that Federal and State public input requirements are met. The amount of interest on particular issues is noted from the attention received from transportation-related topics and the amount of call-intake received on the issues. The public hearings allow for citizen input and corresponding reply to the public. This forum has allowed for issues to be heard and has provided deliberation of alternative solutions. Public hearings are advertised in accordance with adopted MPO procedure, that is, ten (10) days in advance of the hearing date. Advertisements are placed in a newspaper providing general circulation coverage for the Hernando County area.

Nevertheless, the current policy utilized for the notification/advertisement of public hearings should be periodically reviewed for its effectiveness in soliciting public participation. Possible alternative methods should be reviewed for cost and population type/size targeted.

Larger newspaper notification formats are now used in local newspapers as an alternative to classified ads. Additionally, community and business groups are directly notified by mail and telephone of special workshops and meetings, and public service announcements on community access television are now used for hearings and workshops. Public meeting notices are also posted on the MPO website.

Local public hearings also serve to promote active citizen participation if held in each respective area. Target areas, which are relevant to current subject matter, are identified for the purpose of holding meetings at suitable locations within these locales. When appropriate, meetings and workshops have been conducted within the Spring Hill, Brooksville, and Ridge Manor areas. As directed by the MPO, staff will continue to hold workshops within subareas of the county depending on the nature of the issues being

considered. Furthermore, during a TDP Update, a public information workshop was held at an alternative commercial location. Additionally, during a series of public workshops regarding a proposed increase in transit fares, displays were set up at the transfer station in Spring Hill, at the County Government Center in Brooksville, and at the transfer center located in south Brooksville. The MPO will continue to look for suitable alternative venues for public interest informal displays and workshops.

All substantial revisions or concerns of the public are documented for later discussions. All of the public's issues and concerns raised at previous meetings are addressed at the following meeting and changes will be undertaken to address these concerns, as directed by the MPO. This review occurs at all stages of document preparation, public hearings, and workshops.

Comments from the public have been recorded at all official meetings, hearings and workshops held by the MPO and/or staff. Whenever appropriate, comments have been included in project documentation. Furthermore, comments have been addressed at follow-up meetings. Staff will continue to record public comments at all official meetings, hearings, and workshops. These comments will be presented to the MPO as part of relevant agenda items.

The public participation and hearing process is periodically reviewed and potentially revised for its effectiveness in disseminating information to the public and in soliciting/receiving adequate response from all segments of the community.

Prior to each MPO Board, TAC, BPAC, CAC, TSOC, and LCB meetings, news releases are given to the local newspapers (St. Petersburg Times, Hernando Today [Tampa Tribune]), and the WWJB radio station. The press is usually present at policy board meetings, and has written informational articles about the relevant issues of those meetings which have provided additional public awareness of transportation issues. From time to time, the press will also cover meetings of the MPO review committees. The MPO also has its own website at www.hernandocounty.us/mpo where a listing of programs and projects is maintained.

- **Please provide a chart or description of the time allowed for the public to review and comment on key decision making transportation documents and plans.**

Response: The MPO has consistently held public hearings prior to final adoption and amendments of the TIP, UPWP, LRTP, and all other documents pertaining to transportation-related issues each year. All documents have been made available in a location accessible to all members of the community for public review and comment fifteen (15) to thirty (30) days prior to the hearing. Unless Federal or State adoption timetables dictate otherwise, the 30 day review period will continue to be used. All documents are available to the public at no cost.

5. **Does the PPP include a specific and separate strategy for engaging low-income and minority populations? Is there a process to evaluate effectiveness of public involvement, including success at engaging low-income and minority residents? How is this process being carried out? What outreach efforts have proven most effective?**

Response: Yes, the Environmental Justice Program has become an established part of the MPO's public involvement process. The MPO has developed an extensive list of

contacts of persons and agencies associated with the low-income and minority populations of Hernando County. For the most part, these populations are concentrated in the City of Brooksville.

In order to identify areas in which to focus the MPO's efforts, re: Environmental Justice and Title VI, 2000 Census data was queried to pinpoint block groups with high levels of low-income, minority, and elderly (65+) populations. Several Environmental Justice Workshops have been held, either during development of the 2035 LRTP, or during prior updates of the Transit Development Plan and the Transit Operations Plan. Each of these addressed issues at the systems, programmatic and corridor levels.

During the LRTP update, an Environmental Justice discussion group was held to review the potential impacts of transportation improvements on minority and low-income populations in Hernando County. In particular, public transportation, sidewalk, bicycle, and road improvements that abutted or bisected minority and/or low-income communities were discussed. Participants included key community leaders and representatives of social service agencies in Hernando County.

The MPO has discovered that, according to the participants, the biggest problem facing the minority and low-income populations in Hernando County is transportation to social service organizations. In order to solicit minority and low-income community input regarding existing and proposed transit service, three Environmental Justice Workshops were held during the major update of the TDP (2009).

The MPO is committed to continuing and expanding efforts to involve the low-income and minority communities throughout the planning process.

6. Who is responsible for public involvement?

Response: The extant MPO staff participates in the public involvement process, with certain staff members having specific responsibility for implementation of the program, including responsibilities for the Public Participation Plan, Citizens Guide and Measures of Effectiveness reports, MPO Newsletters, etc.

Is there a dedicated staff person for public involvement?

Response: Not at present.

Has this person(s) received training in public involvement? If yes, please provide when and where the training was provided.

Response: The MPO staff received the following training:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
8/31/10	Public Outreach	Ocoee, FL
1/13/11	Social Media Policies	Brooksville, FL
2/22/11	Social Media Policies	Brooksville, FL
3/9/11	Social Media Development	Spring Hill, FL

AIR QUALITY

1. **What agency is designated for air-quality planning under Section 174 of the Clean Air Act (CAA)?**

Response: The MPO is the responsible entity.

- **If this agency is not the MPO, what agreements exist between the MPO and the designated air-quality-planning agency describing their respective roles and responsibilities?**

Response: Not applicable.

2. **What activities/efforts are underway that involve the MPO related to air quality?**

Response: MPO staff is actively monitoring the status of the ozone air quality conformity rule and determination, and is engaged in the coordination efforts of the West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee.

Section (3), (4), and (7) through (10): The prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, gender, or disability as dictated by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended 49 U.S.C. 5332; 23 U.S.C. 324; the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Older Americans Act; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

1. **What goals, policies, approaches, and measurements has the MPO adopted / undertaken for ensuring, demonstrating, and substantiating that the planning process complies with Title VI and related requirements?**

Response: The MPO has strived to update, as needed, our Title VI Certification. The most recent change has been the adoption of the FDOT Title VI Program in 2008 to improve statewide consistency and tracking. The following year, the MPO adopted a Title VI Complaint Procedure and Limited English Proficiency Program.

To date, the MPO has designated a Title VI Liaison, include contract language stating our commitment to nondiscrimination, developed and adopted a Complaint Procedure, and is prepared to take action to correct any violations of the Title VI Act.

The MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transit Development Plan (TDP), Public Involvement Plan (PIP), Title VI Complaint Process, and Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP) all contain elements to substantiate compliance with Title VI and related requirements.

2. **Has the planning process developed a demographic profile of the metropolitan planning area that includes identification of the locations of socioeconomic groups, including low-income, disabled, religious, and minority populations as covered by Title VI provisions? Explain the process.**

Response: A demographic analysis of the environmental justice areas was conducted as part of the 2035 LRTP. The analysis identified geographic sub-areas with high

minority and low-income populations using census data and information from human service agencies.

The MPO uses census block group and American Community Survey data in developing a demographic profile for the planning area. The MPO uses the following tools to analyze the needs of various socio-economic groups in the county: Transit Planning Analysis, Transit Market Assessment and Community Initiatives. These processes are contained within the various MPO plans and programs (LRTP, TDP CIT) which respond to system investments for the different socio-economic groups.

Section (5): Section 1101 (b) of SAFETEA_LU regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in FHWA and FTA planning projects (48 CFR Part 26). Note: MPOs that are part of municipal or county governments have some of these processes handled by the host agency.

- 1. Does the MPO include the DBE policy statement in its boilerplate contract language for consultants and sub-consultants? Mandatory assurance verbatim (also known as Uniform Certification Process)?**

Response: Yes, in all contract language.

- 2. Does the MPO have DBE Assurance language in all of its contracts? “The contractor or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR Part 26 in the award and administration of USDOT assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which may result in the termination of this contract or such other remedy as the recipient deems appropriate.”**

Response: Yes, in all contract language.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

- 1. How does the MPO ensure that the TIP includes all regionally significant transportation projects, including intermodal facilities regardless of fund source?**

Response: One of the most significant aspects of a TIP is the adoption of a set of priorities to provide policy level guidance for regional investment. The CCC prioritizes projects at a regional level for programming. To this end, the CCC addresses regional project prioritization and coordination at several levels, as follows:

- At a technical level, the Technical Review Team developed a process for prioritization of regional projects based upon output of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Model in addition to other planning factors.
- The development of the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) represented a milestone in regional project coordination and cooperation. Regional projects were prioritized using criteria developed and agreed by all CCC jurisdictions. Subsequently, TRIP funds were programmed for the first fiscal years. In accordance with State statutes, this will be a continuing responsibility of the CCC.

- The CCC and Staff Directors Coordination Team reviews the FDOT Work Program at critical points during its development cycle and comments on the coordination of project phases on regionally significant projects. Of particular significance are projects which are programmed or in the short-range component of the SIS and FIHS.
- The Regional Transit Committee has identified regionally significant transit routes and facilities, and has prioritized related projects, based upon a set of criteria developed by the MPOs and transit agencies that make up the committee.

2. Based on the value of regional coordination efforts in the 2009 LRTP update, what improvements or notable achievements has the MPO made to improve the 2014 LRTP update?

Response: The goal of the CCC to creatively address and prioritize transportation needs in West Central Florida is achieved through the support and cooperation of its member agencies, partner entities and advisory committees. The adopted interlocal agreement, detailing membership, responsibilities and operating procedures, formally defines the CCC and its processes. By conducting its business through a ‘top-down’ approach, the CCC is successful in incorporating regional significant solutions into local plans. For example, the schedules for the regional and local 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Updates were coordinated so the 2035 Regional LRTP Update preceded and guided the development of each local MPO’s update. The CCC builds consensus on major transportation issues while retaining each county’s autonomy. Supported by a Technical Review Team comprised of technical staff from each MPO, PTO and FDOT, the CCC is able to comprehensively analyze complex regional transportation issues.

Florida’s MPO Advisory Council has recognized the CCC as a model for others for the prioritization of locally submitted TRIP projects of regional significance. In addition, the CCC was the recipient of the National Association of Regional Councils’ 2006 Major Metropolitan Achievement Award for pioneering regional transportation planning in Tampa Bay area.

3. Overall, what is the level of “consciousness” and concern about going “green” in your region, among local member jurisdictions, or the general public? How does this affect (or not) the transportation planning process?

Response: Consistent with the Florida Growth Management Act, the implementation of green policies and corresponding technologies is jointly coordinated through the County’s Comprehensive Land use Plan and the MPO’s LRTP.

4. Describe the regional effort towards sharing data, selecting performance measures, and identifying CMP strategies to solve regional congestion problems?

Response: The Congestion Management System Performance Report for the CCC was last updated in March 2006. The Performance Report for the CCC does not identify specific improvements within a corridor or on a roadway. Rather, the performance report identifies strategies that are appropriate for each major corridor. The update in 2006 was based on the 10 travel markets developed during the 2025 Regional LRTP Update.

These corridors were used to identify strategies appropriate for addressing increased demand and congested conditions.

5. Describe any regionally significant CMP activities being undertaken or recently undertaken by your MPO?

Response: In its CMP 2010 Report, the MPO identified the SR 50/CR 587 (Mariner Boulevard) intersection as the most regionally significant area of concern. SR 50 is the primary east/west corridor and a SIS facility. This project and all other recent projects in the SR 50 corridor include ITS enhancements such as extensions of the optical fiber network, controller and other state-of-the-art ITS equipment upgrades for the coordinated traffic control network.