



Hernando County Metropolitan Planning Organization



Public Involvement Process

June 2007

(SAFETEA-LU Compliance Document)

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

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**HERNANDO COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS**

**Section I
INTRODUCTION**

Background

The Hernando County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was established in September 1992. Chapter 339.155, Florida Statutes sets forth the requirements for the public participation process for transportation planning responsibilities of the MPOs. Chapter 339.175, F.S. and subsequent updates set forth the framework of each MPO, membership, responsibilities, and appropriate committees involved in transportation planning.

At the time of the development of this PIP, the MPO responded to the mandate for public participation in the urban transportation planning process set out under the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The purpose of TEA-21 was to develop a transportation system that is “economically efficient, environmentally sound, provides the foundation for the Nation to compete in the global economy and will move people and goods in an energy efficient manner.” TEA-21 also required that MPOs develop in cooperation with the State and affected transit operators, a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) covering the MPO’s planning area.

Compliance with SAFETEA-LU

The MPO has now completed an extensive review of the PIP to ensure its compliance with the 2005 federal act called the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU is the successor act to TEA-21 discussed above. As a result, this document contains specific actions to make its public involvement strategies comply with new federal requirements for the planning process.

The MPO is committed to maintaining a Public Involvement Process (PIP) that is in tune with the changing makeup and needs of the community. On an annual basis the MPO has performed an evaluation of the effectiveness of the public involvement strategies laid out in the PIP.

Section II

RECENT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Hernando County MPO has continuously affirmed its commitment to providing a continuous public involvement program for all segments of Hernando County's population. By adopting a Public Involvement Process (PIP) in 1994, along with reassessing and updating the PIP in on an annual basis, the MPO has met, and even exceeded, the federal mandate for public participation.

Since adoption of the process, the following milestones in public participation have occurred:

- ❑ Since 1994, the MPO has maintained an active Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) as a standing committee of the MPO. The CAC has proven to be instrumental in providing review and comments on the MPO's key plans and programs, including the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transit Development Plan, the Transit Operations Plan, and the Congestion/Mobility Management System (C/MMS).
- ❑ Public involvement was extensively used when formulating Goals and Objectives to guide development and address community issues during the update of the MPO's 2025 LRTP completed in 2001. Other activities related to the LRTP Update included holding public workshops, including full-day Consensus Building Workshops and Environmental Justice Workshops, at key points during the Plan's development, as well as holding public hearings prior to the adoption of various Plan elements.
- ❑ Prior to the establishment of the County's C/MMS, the MPO directed that a Citizens Transportation Survey be conducted to obtain comments from the community regarding locations of unacceptable congestion. Approximately 400-500 responses were received each year. The success of the Transportation Survey led to this process becoming an annual part of the MPO's public involvement program. Seven annual Citizen Transportation Surveys were conducted between 1997 and 2003 with similar success.
- ❑ The MPO continues to publish its newsletter which, in turn, is widely distributed throughout Hernando County. During 1998 and 1999 the focus of the newsletter shifted towards the development of the Year 2020 LRTP and the update of the Transit Development Plan. In fact, the major update of the Transit Development Plan in 2002/2003 precipitated a major reworking of the newsletter's format and content, as well as its being renamed to "Transportation Talk." Four sequential newsletter issues were fully devoted to mass transit

issues, and were used as handout materials for public workshops. Development of the 2025 Plan Update will become a major newsletter topic during 2001, and will likely receive exclusive coverage at key points in the process.

- ❑ The public was also extensively involved with the creation and adoption of the MPO's Transit Development Plan (TDP) and the 2003 TDP Update, as well as a detailed Transit Operations Plan. Public involvement activities included holding workshops in the Spring Hill and Brooksville areas, and scheduling public hearings at key points in the planning process. Use of a special Community Review Committee to consider transit matters was a key element in the public participation program, and has since been merged with the Citizens Advisory Committee to ensure full and regular coverage of transit issues.
- ❑ Since 1998, the MPO has maintained an Internet web site. Content on the website has steadily increased. Persons visiting the web site have access to the following information: general information about the MPO, past and current newsletters, meeting dates and agendas, listings of transportation projects, including project priorities and project status and funding; maps of transportation plans, including the LRTP and recommended transit system maps; and traffic count information, including traffic counts for each major roadway, peak hour counts, and a map showing count stations. The MPO's web site also provides links to other transportation related sites, including the statewide MPO Advisory Council, and the West Central MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee, of which the Hernando MPO is a voting member. During the past year, the MPO has increased the use of Adobe PDF files to post documents on the web site. This has considerably shortened the turnaround time required to get documents up on the web site, thus increasing their exposure during plan development.
- ❑ The participation of public organizations and interest groups has been actively pursued, both through presentations within the community and through direct contact and the solicitation of input during projects.
- ❑ In order to enhance the public's awareness of important meetings and workshops, large newspaper notification formats are now regularly used (up to quarter page ads) in local newspapers as an alternative to classified ads. Community and business groups are directly notified by mail and telephone of special workshops and meetings. Additionally, public service announcements on community access television are now used for hearings and workshops.

- ❑ Public comment is also solicited during each MPO meeting, either during discussion on individual agenda items, or during a Public Forum item at the end of each meeting.
- ❑ Almost every year since the initial adoption of the PIP, the MPO has conducted a comprehensive review of its public participation strategies.
- ❑ At the request of the Federal Highway Administration, MPO staff participated in a Benchmarking Study in which the Hernando MPO, along with two other MPOs from Florida, presented their public participation programs to several MPOs from Michigan. The session was useful to staffs from both the Florida and Michigan MPOs, particularly in recognizing key differences in the structure of MPO programs, and the manner in which the public can be engaged under these programs.
- ❑ The MPO has made a considerable effort to involve the low-income and minority communities throughout the planning process. Mostly located within the south portion of the City of Brooksville, these groups have been engaged at key points in the development of the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transit Development Plan.

The MPO continues to seek new and innovative ways in which to make the community aware of the MPO's activities, and to keep the public well-informed regarding plans, programs and policies that are under consideration.

Section III

SAFETEA-LU PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), was signed into legislation by President Bush on August 10, 2005. Until recently, states and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) were required to comply with the planning provisions stipulated under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA- 21), the legislation preceding SAFETEA-LU. To ensure that the appropriate planning documents are in compliance with the provisions of SAFETEA-LU, the Hernando County MPO conducted a review of its Public Involvement Plan (PIP).

The Final Rule regarding statewide and metropolitan transportation planning resulting from the SAFETEA-LU legislation is cited in this document according to the FHWA *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) 23, Sections 450 and 500. The rule sets forth the requirements for the public participation process in conjunction with all aspects of transportation planning of a Metropolitan Planning Organization. The public involvement process must provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and support early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs. The process must also meet the following requirements and criteria:

- Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised;
- Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including, but not limited to, central city and other local jurisdictions);
- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered;
- Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of plans and TIPs;

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

In order to adequately respond to the above mandate, it is imperative that MPOs move beyond "traditional" means of securing public participation. This includes an extensive public outreach program which will bring in segments of the community which have frequently been excluded from full participation in the transportation planning and decision-making process.

Based upon the federal mandate, it is clear that the usual practice of holding public hearings at the time of plan adoption does not constitute a full public participation process. Rather, full public involvement should be sought during all phases of the planning process, and should reach into the community to the greatest extent possible, rather than having the public bear the entire responsibility of reaching meetings held at one location.

To this end, the recommendations for expanding the public participation process will focus on the following objectives:

- Where necessary, expand the frequency of meetings with public groups.
- Enhance interaction with the public through a format which encourages meaningful dialogue.
- Expand the use of media and workshops to increase public knowledge of transportation issues.
- Focus public participation by holding meetings and workshops within specific communities or corridors.
- Involve segments of the community which have been traditionally under-served in the transportation planning process.

Based upon the requirements of the new federal act, SAFETEA-LU, two additional compliance areas are now part of the MPO's public involvement process, specifically:

- MPO consultation with state and local agencies - the MPO will consult with appropriate state and federal agencies for environmental protection, wildlife management, land management and historic preservation agencies.
- Employment of visualization techniques and availability of electronic documents via the internet.

Additional details regarding these two new public involvement activities can be found in Section V of this report.

Section IV

MPO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

The purpose of this section is to document those existing MPO planning activities which are applicable to the SAFETEA-LU Public Involvement Process. Essentially, these plans and programs consist of activities which the MPO Board has deemed to be of significant public interest. As such, it is the intent of the MPO that the public participate in the formulation and review of these plans and programs throughout their development.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) serves as the principal budgetary document for the MPO. The UPWP lays out planning tasks to be undertaken by the MPO during the upcoming fiscal year, and in some cases, tracks the continuation of projects initiated in previous years. The primary guidance in developing a UPWP is the need to maintain the "3-C Process," i.e., a program which is continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative. The UPWP also contains the number of hours, associated costs, and agency participation required to successfully complete each task.

Given the federal mandate for public involvement, the UPWP should also strive to meet the planning needs of the community, and whenever necessary and appropriate, should include specific work tasks to address these needs. Hence, to the maximum extent possible, the nature of the tasks should reflect the transportation needs of the community. The level of effort expended for each of the identified community concerns will by necessity be constrained by funding availability.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Development, maintenance and update of a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is one of the fundamental responsibilities of an MPO. These activities are required under both federal (23 USC 105,134 and 135, and Sections 3, 5 and 8 of the Federal Transit Act and 49 CFR 1.48(b) and 1.51) and state (Section 339,175 F.S.) regulations and law.

As developed by the Hernando County MPO, the TIP contains all significant transportation projects scheduled for improvement within the upcoming five years. Projects are grouped by jurisdictional responsibility, and indicate year, type, and funding level for each improvement. From a policy-making perspective, the TIP is particularly important in that it establishes the priorities of the MPO for scheduling improvements on the State Highway System and the use of Federal funding on non-

State facilities. Historically, the TIP has been adopted following an advertised public hearing. The timetable for developing and adopting the TIP document has been done in accordance with federal and state schedules. Hence, adoption of the TIP occurs in Spring of each year, following the gathering of project information from appropriate state and local agencies/jurisdictions.

An important recent addition to the TIP process has been implementing TEA-21 requirements for identifying transportation enhancement projects. This process entails an extensive public outreach program to ensure that all interested parties are informed of the availability of enhancement funds and are given the opportunity to submit project proposals.

In recent years, the emphasis for setting TIP project priorities has shifted toward use of the Hernando County Congestion Mobility Management System (C/MMS). As a continually operating process for determining the extent of congestion and mobility deficiencies, the C/MMS takes a more comprehensive approach to setting funding priorities that have been traditionally used. To this end, the public comments received during the update of the MPO's C/MMS will be a large part of the basis for determining the acceptability of the program to the community. In particular, the type of projects and the means for obtaining their funding are largely based upon these comments.

Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans

The Bicycle and Pedestrian planning programs continue to be strong emphasis areas of the continuing MPO program. To date, the MPO has developed a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and has adopted a Comprehensive Bicycle Plan.

Currently, the BPAC is evaluating the suitability of existing roadways for bicycle use, as well as identifying and mapping proposed bicycle corridors. It is expected that the BPAC will be fully involved with formulating and reviewing opportunities for the use of alternative transportation modes in the long range plan.

As mentioned earlier, the BPAC has also been instrumental in putting the transportation enhancement process into place. Furthermore, the public has been ready to respond to proposals for enhancement projects by providing frequent comments on their prioritization and implementation.

Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Program

The overall mission of Florida's transportation disadvantaged program is to ensure the availability of efficient, cost-effective, and quality transportation services for transportation disadvantaged

persons. The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) selected the Hernando County MPO to serve as the Official Planning Agency (OPA) for Hernando County's transportation disadvantaged program in August 1993. It replaced the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners which previously had served as the OPA for the County. In this capacity, the MPO provides administrative and planning services to guide the activities of the Community Transportation Coordinator.

The purpose of the OPA is to perform long-range transportation disadvantaged planning and assist the CTD and the Local Coordinating Board (LCB) in implementing the transportation disadvantaged program within a designated service area. Also, the OPA is responsible for preparing and submitting applications to the CTD for planning grants funded out of the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund. In addition, it is required to certify on an annual basis compliance with the intent of the CTD that the membership of the TD LCB represent, to the maximum degree possible, a cross section of the local community.

The purpose of the LCB is to identify local service needs and to provide information, advice, and direction to the CTC on the coordination of services to be provided to the transportation disadvantaged. Also, the LCB serves as an advisory body to the state CTD. In this capacity, the LCB reviews the Memorandum of Agreement between the CTD and the CTC. Additionally, the Coordinating Board reviews and approves the Service Plan of the CTC, monitors the CTC's performance, and submits a review report on an annual basis. The LCB must also review and approve the new three year Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP). The Hernando County TDSP is to be revised in September 2003.

The LCB is to meet at least quarterly and is required by the CTD to hold at least one public hearing a year. The purpose of the public hearing is to provide input to the Coordinating Board on unmet needs or any other areas relating to local transportation services.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The MPO developed the most recent update of its multi-modal Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) during 2000/01, and the 2025 Plan was adopted in December 2001. Plan development activities were closely coordinated with the District Seven Office of FDOT, and included extensive cooperation with other local, regional, state and federal agencies. Creation of a long range plan is perhaps the most significant activity of an MPO in that it incorporates all aspects of the local, state and federal planning programs into a comprehensive technical and policy document.

For the fifth time, the long range transportation needs for the Tampa Bay area are being assessed within the context of a regional demand forecasting model developed by FDOT. This model is currently in the process of being re-validated and will be used in the LRTP Update for 2025. MPO staff are now updating future year population and employment data for determining long range travel demand. As addressed later in this document, the requirement to develop a “top down” long range transportation plan for the Tampa Bay Transportation Management Authority, has led to an expanded effort to involve the four member MPOs in strengthening the technical basis for regional coordination.

The successful completion of the LRTP depended not only on a sound technical process, but also on obtaining the future "vision" of the community and policy makers through the use of a set of Goals and Objectives which lay out this vision and use it to evaluate the results of the technical process. To develop the goals, policies and objectives for the 2025 Plan, the MPO strongly relied on the Hernando County *Comprehensive Plan* as the basis for setting Plan policies, as well as on the preceding Year 2020 Plan. Hence, the County’s public planning process, as required under the state's comprehensive planning regulations, was followed in order to strengthen its own public involvement process. During the last round of Plan updates, the federal government required that all MPOs perform a complete review of supporting policies, and amend these policies as necessary. The MPO fulfilled this task through a detailed reassessment of the effectiveness of past policies toward attaining the overall transportation goals of the community, again using its committee structure as the sounding board for community and technical concerns. For the upcoming update of the 2025 LRTP, the MPO will again assess existing policies through its committee structure.

In order to successfully determine changing public interest, it is necessary to recognize and work with the diverse urban/rural nature of the county. The unincorporated suburban community of Spring Hill presents vastly different needs and opportunities than does the governmental center of Brooksville, the county seat. Although it has recently experienced a high rate of growth, Brooksville is still situated within a predominately rural setting, although residential expansion in the area around the City has recently proliferated.

Furthermore, the needs of other rural areas are frequently heard during hearings and meetings. For this reason it has been necessary to target these diverse groups and incorporate their respective concerns within the adopted LRTP. Hence, it is incumbent upon the MPO to secure community direction early within the plan development process.

Transit Development Plan (TDP)

A major planning effort of the MPO in 2002/2003 was performing an Interim Update (2002) followed by a Major Update (2003) of the Transit Development Plan for the Brooksville Urbanized Area. Through a cooperative effort with District Seven Office of FDOT, the MPO initiated the TDP Update and developed a strategy for involving committees and the public through a series of meetings and workshops. Much of the community input was received during the second Consensus Building Workshop, held in 2001 just prior to adoption of the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan. Specifically, community direction regarding the relative importance of investing in mass transit compared to highway spending, highlighted the need to maintain mobility for the transit dependent population of Hernando County.

The CAC/CRC, composed of representatives from the CAC along with community leaders from the Spring Hill area, continued to serve as the front line for review of mass transit proposals. Development of the TDP generated considerable community interest throughout its duration.

Three sets of workshops were held throughout the TDP development process to engage the public and parties representing the public interest. These were as follows:

- ***Community Transit Workshop*** - this meeting brought together citizens and employers from throughout the community in order to receive comments regarding existing and proposed transit services. Comments were presented to the MPO when deliberating priorities for service enhancements.
- ***Public Agency Workshop*** - the MPO has found it useful to directly involve staff with the many public agencies that provide educational and training opportunities, as well as health care and other social programs, for the many citizens requiring this type of assistance. This workshop gave agency personnel the chance to share their needs and expectations for transit service prior to the formulation of service enhancements.
- ***Environmental Justice Workshops*** - held directly within the low-income and mostly minority community of South Brooksville, lively discussions centered upon access to jobs, medical care and training programs offered in Spring Hill and Brooksville. By holding these meetings early during the development of the Transit Development Plan and the subsequent Transit Operations Plan, community input was considered throughout route development and scheduling activities.

Additionally, two Consensus Building Workshops held in conjunction with the 2025 LRTP Update focused on mobility problems within the Hernando County, particularly in relationship to its large transit dependent population. At that time there were no mass transit services available to the general public within Hernando County. However, the original TDP and the 1999 TDP Update reassessed both short and mid-term needs for mass transit services within the urbanized portions of the county. In particular, the studies focused on the Spring Hill area, with approximately 60,000 persons living within an area of over 60 square miles.

As a result of these workshops, citizen and agency comments formed the basis for identifying alternatives which were assessed during the major TDP update in 2003.

Although the studies addressed different options for service development, given the low density and intensity of land uses in Spring Hill and adjacent areas, the final recommendation was for a combination of circulator and expanded demand responsive services as the preferred alternative. This service concept was further detailed in a Transit Operations Plan conducted as a follow-up study to the TDP and in the 1999 TDP Update. In the year 2000 the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners authorized funding for the local share of capital and operating expenses. It is expected that the funding of mass transit relative to additional highway needs will continue to be a major emphasis area during development of the 2025 Plan Update, and will strive to place short term service delivery options within the context of the transit needs identified within the LRTP. However, as shown in the Year 2020 Cost Affordable Mass Transit Plan, a large fixed route system will not be cost-feasible for the immediate future.

Additionally, the desires of the population in Brooksville and other rural sections of the County were not unheeded. The initial service concept was expanded by adding shuttle service connecting the government center in Brooksville to other commercial activity centers. Furthermore, rural needs were addressed through an innovative proposal for restructuring existing service for the transportation disadvantaged population to serve as feeder service into the urban area.

Section V

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

MPO Board and Committee Structure

All meetings of the Hernando County MPO Board and its committees are conducted in accordance with the procedures and policies which apply to "government in the sunshine." The overall structure of the Hernando MPO program is shown in Figure 1.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

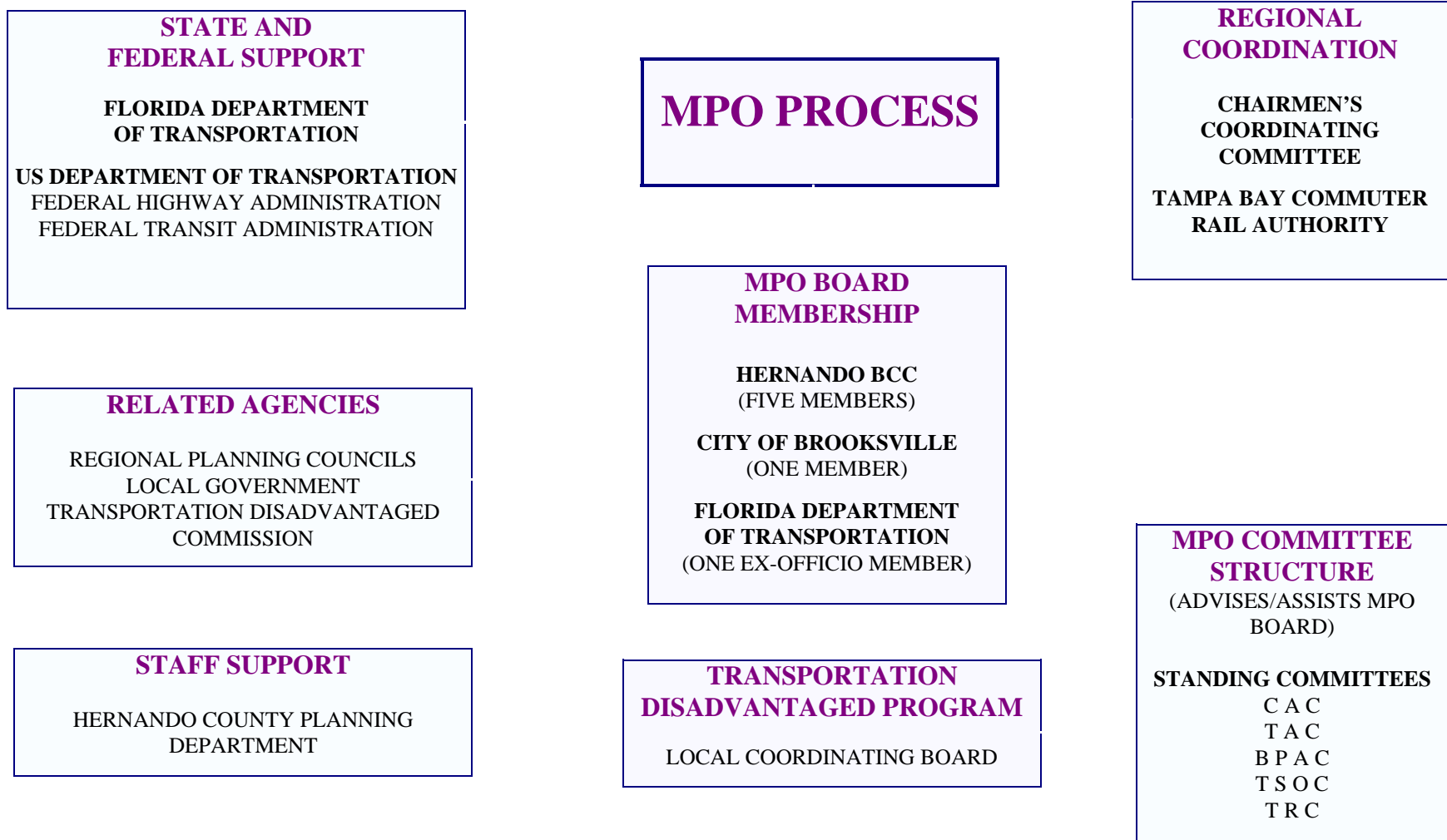
The Hernando County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was established in 1992. The MPO Board membership consists of representatives from both the County Government and the local City Government. There are six (6) members; five (5) from the Hernando County Government and one (1) representative from the City of Brooksville and (1) one non-voting member representing the Department of Transportation District Seven Office. The MPO Board meets monthly, and all meetings are properly noticed and are open to the public.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) was formed in 1991, actually prior to the MPO designation for Hernando County. The BPAC was formed to ensure compliance with the Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Hernando County Comprehensive Plan mandating the development of complementary Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans. Hence, the BPAC was formed to serve as a citizens advisory group whose primary function is to give input on bikeways planning, plan implementation for a County Bicycle and Pedestrian Comprehensive Plan, and education and coordination techniques for pedestrian and bicyclists. The membership of BPAC consists of nine (9) volunteers and represent each of the following categories:

- Hernando County Sheriff's Office
- Hernando County Parks & Recreation (Community Services)
- City of Brooksville
- Five representatives from the public at large
- A representative from the Florida Department of Transportation

**Figure 1
ORGANIZATION OF THE MPO PROGRAM**



The membership of BPAC is appointed by the MPO Board for two year staggered terms. Under current procedures, the BPAC forwards all comments and recommendations to the Technical Advisory Committee in order to better coordinate bicycle/pedestrian issues with local jurisdictions. The BPAC meets quarterly on the first Tuesday of the month. As is the case with the MPO, meetings of the BPAC are properly noticed and are open to the public.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), as mandated by Chapter 339.175(17), F.S., is a committee which works cooperatively at the direction of the Metropolitan Planning Organization in an advisory capacity on all technical matters relating to transportation. The membership of the TAC consists of technically qualified representatives employed by, or associated with a public or semi-public agency related to urban planning, traffic engineering, mass transit, aviation and/or administration with responsibility for the control, development or improvement of the transportation facilities within the Hernando County MPO boundaries. The membership of TAC is appointed by the MPO Board with four year terms. The TAC forwards all comments and recommendations to the MPO Board and meets bi-monthly on the third Tuesday of the month. All TAC meetings are properly noticed and are open to the public.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is mandated under the Department of Transportation/ Federal Highway Administration regulations in 23 CFR Part 450.316 and Chapter 339.175(16), F.S. Membership/committee formation began in February 1994 with the CAC becoming fully involved with development of long range policies in the fall of that year. The CAC serves at the pleasure of the MPO and is responsible for the following activities, as stated in the CAC Bylaws:

- Provide information and overall community values and needs into the transportation planning program of the MPO.
- Evaluating and proposing solutions from a citizens perspective concerning alternative transportation proposals and critical issues.
- Providing knowledge gained through the CAC into local citizen group discussions and meetings.
- Enhancing awareness and promoting credibility for the MPO program.

The membership of the CAC is designed to be reflective of the demographics of Hernando County including race, gender, and area of residence. Current population makeup and distribution is shown in Figure 2. CAC membership is appointed by the MPO Board for four-year staggered terms. The membership of the CAC is composed of eleven (11) citizens whose membership represents a broad spectrum of social and economic backgrounds and interests in transportation issues, as follows;

- One (1) member from each of the five (5) County Commission districts;
- One (1) member from the City of Brooksville;
- Two (2) members representing the public at large;
- Two (2) members representing at-large minorities, and;
- One (1) member at-large representing the transportation disadvantaged community.

To the greatest extent possible, the committee has been composed of 50 percent men and 50 percent women.

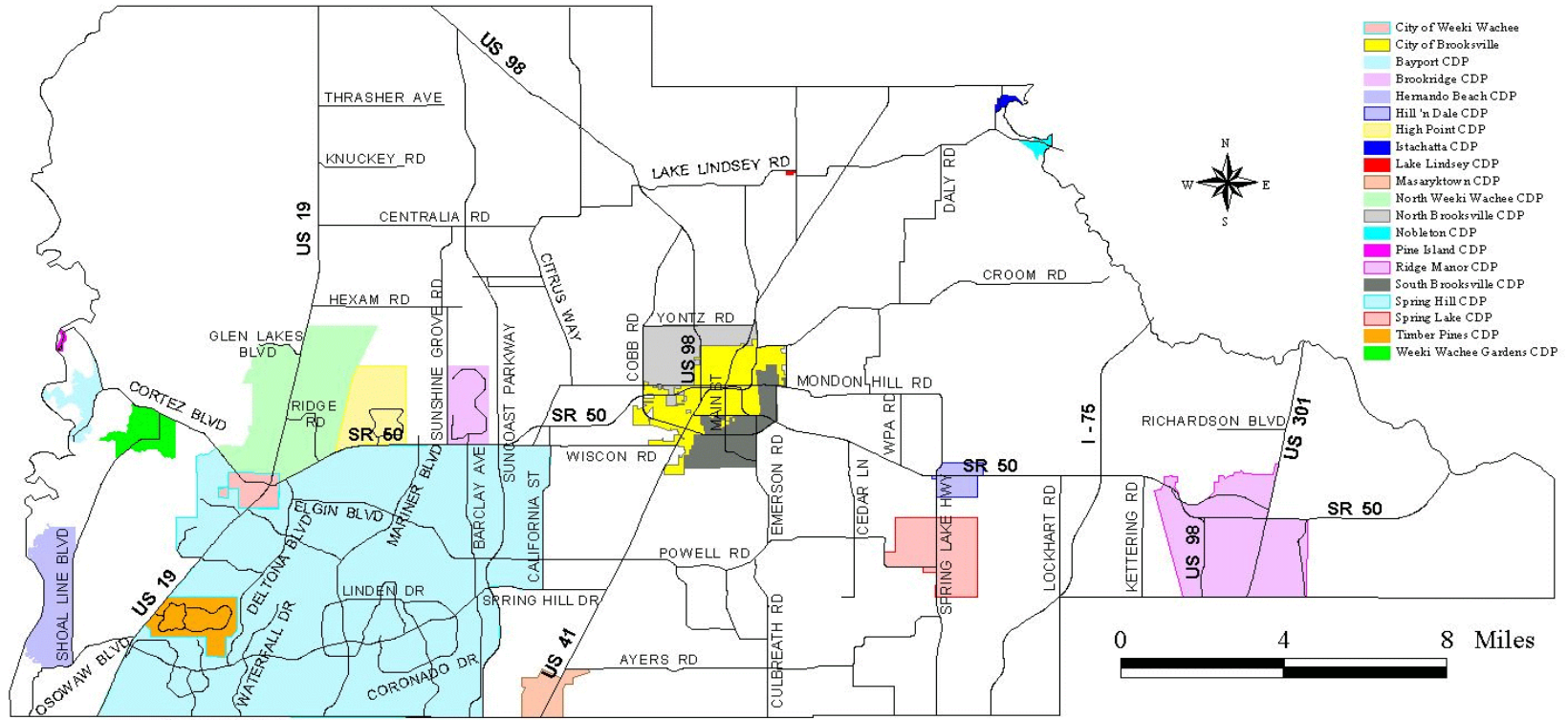
The CAC forwards all comments and recommendations to the MPO Board and meets bi-monthly on the third Tuesday of the month. The CAC has stayed fully involved with all major planning programs of the MPO and has provided comment on a timely basis. All CAC meetings are properly noticed and are open to the public.

Noteworthy projects for which the CAC played an integral part in reviewing and providing citizen comment were the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan Update, the 2002 Interim Transit Development Plan Update and the 2003 Major Transit Development Plan, the Transit Operations Plan, and the Congestion/Mobility Management System. For each of these milestone projects, the CAC was presented with a wide range of planning issues, all of which have considerable short and long term implications for the community. The CAC has also reviewed all other pertinent transportation related documents. In particular, during preparation of the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transit Development Plans, the CAC was an effective forum for funneling citizen discussion on these topics.

FIGURE 2: POPULATION BY SEX AND RACE			
HERNANDO COUNTY	4/1/2000	4/1/2002**	4/1/2003
MALE	62,130	47.53%	66,862
FEMALE	68,672	52.47%	73,812
TOTAL	130,802	100.00%	140,674
CITY OF BROOKSVILLE	4/1/2000	4/1/2000	4/1/2003
MALE	3,232	44.49%	3,247
FEMALE	4,032	55.51%	4,050
TOTAL	7,264	100.00%	7,297
SPRING HILL CDP*	4/1/2000	4/1/2000	4/1/2003
MALE	32,622	47.22%	35,987
FEMALE	36,456	52.78%	40,216
TOTAL	69,078	100.00%	76,203
HERNANDO COUNTY	4/1/2000	4/1/2000	4/1/2003
WHITE	121,453	92.85%	130,619
BLACK	5,330	4.07%	5,732
AMERICAN INDIAN	391	0.30%	421
ASIAN	840	0.64%	903
OTHER RACE	1,314	1.00%	1,413
TWO+ RACES	1,474	1.13%	1,585
TOTAL	130,802	100.00%	140,674
CITY OF BROOKSVILLE	4/1/2000	4/1/2000	4/1/2003
WHITE	5,443	74.93%	5,468
BLACK	1,548	21.31%	1,555
AMERICAN INDIAN	26	0.36%	26
ASIAN	89	1.23%	89
OTHER RACE	79	1.09%	79
TWO+ RACES	79	1.09%	79
TOTAL	7,264	100.00%	7,297
SPRING HILL CDP*	4/1/2000	4/1/2000	4/1/2003
WHITE	64,591	93.50%	71,253
BLACK	2,073	3.00%	2,287
AMERICAN INDIAN	167	0.24%	184
ASIAN	549	0.79%	606
OTHER RACE	842	1.22%	929
TWO+ RACES	856	1.24%	944
TOTAL	69,078	100.00%	76,203
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU; HERNANDO COUNTY BUILDING DIVISION;			
* CENSUS DESIGNATED (UNINCORPORATED) PLACE			
** 4/1/2002 PERCENTAGES ARE FROM "BEBR", THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS RESEARCH, FL POPULATION STUDIES, JAN 2003; DATE FOR 4/1/2003 ARE LINEAR ESTIMATES ONLY			

Insert Figure 3

Census 2000: Cities and Communities*



* CDP - Census Designated (Unincorporated) Place

Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB)

The Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB) was established pursuant to Chapter 427, F.A.C. and Rule 41-2, F.S. The LCB is responsible for overseeing the transportation disadvantaged program and providing citizen input on how to improve coordination within the system. The LCB is comprised of up to fourteen (14) members representing all facets of the community and participating state agencies. The state agencies represented are the Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Department of Children and Families, Florida Department of Education (Vocational Rehabilitation), Florida Department of Veteran's Affairs, Florida Department of Childhood Development Services, Florida Department of Elder Affairs, and the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (Medicaid). Citizens represented on the LCB include the following: county government, elderly, handicapped, a user of the TD system, a citizen advocate, and the local private-for-profit transportation system. Additionally, a representative from the Hernando County School Board sits on the LCB.

As pointed out in a previous section, the Hernando County MPO is the Official Planning Agency overseeing the LCB's activities as required by Chapter 427, F.A.C., and Rule 41-2, F.S. During the MPO meetings which follow LCB meetings, activities of interest are brought before the MPO Board for informational purposes and discussion.

The LCB conducts a public hearing once a year to gather input from citizens to identify issues, needs and concerns of the general and transportation disadvantaged population the County. All meetings are open to the public, are held in a fully accessible location, and allow time at the end of each meeting for public comment. The meetings are televised on local government cable access and held quarterly on the third Thursday of the month.

Public Access to Plans and Documents

Annually the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are updated, revised, and approved by the MPO Board and the TAC. The BPAC is responsible for pro-actively providing pedestrian and bicycle related input into the work program and plan development process. Subsequently, plans are forwarded to the TAC for comment and review and to the MPO Board for final review, hearing and formal adoption. Only those plans, programs and policies which are specifically related to pedestrian and bicycle issues will be forwarded for BPAC review and comment. However, all plans and programs which are of a technical nature are forwarded to the TAC in order to provide the MPO Board with adequate technical direction prior to taking final action. These documents are included in all agenda packages which, in turn, are transmitted to several other public agencies.

Based upon its annual PIP review, the MPO has directed that the public will have access to *all* planning documents for review and comment throughout the year 15 to 30 days prior to each meeting and/or public hearing, if permitted by federal/state adoption deadlines. Staff has endeavored to have planning documents available for inspection at least 15 days prior to meetings and hearings, and will attempt to have documents available 30 days prior to meetings.

Posting of documents on the MPO's web site is also an effective means of distribution, although this generally occurs after their formal adoption. By increasing the timeliness of postings, the MPO can provide a high degree of access to both agencies and citizens.

Public Hearings

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 (up to quarter page ads) 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 web site. However, as mentioned above, the MPO can continue to explore additional methods for advertisement of meetings, such as encouraging notices in community and business newsletters, and working directly with the press to have articles published during the LRTP update.

Local public hearings can also serve to promote active citizen participation if held in each respective area. Target areas which are relevant to current subject matter should be 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 location (the Wal-Mart Supercenter at SR 50 and Mariner Boulevard). The MPO should continue to look for other 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 will occur 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 meetings following the meeting(s) at which comments were received. 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.

Each year the public participation and hearing process will be 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.

MPO Newsletter

An MPO Newsletter is distributed several times per year throughout Hernando County, as well the rest of FDOT District Seven, to pertinent agencies, organizations, public interest groups, homeowners associations, clubs and civic groups, and county liaison departments. The Newsletter provides a glance at: the upcoming issues of the MPO Board; the reports, documents, and issues currently being considered and those accomplished; and the dates and times of all board and committee meetings. The format of the Newsletter is designed to be pleasing and informative to the general population of the County. At this time, the MPO Newsletter is sent to approximately sixty (60) interest groups, organizations, and state and federal agencies; two (2) committees and two (2)

boards. The mailing list for the Newsletter is expanded and updated on a regular basis.

The distribution/ mailing list for the Newsletter has been reviewed on a regular basis to ensure full community coverage. Prior to the initial 2025 LRTP Update, the MPO's mailing list (including e-mail addresses) was extensively reviewed and updated, and will again be reviewed prior to mailings for the next 2025 LRTP Update.

The Newsletter has been produced on a semi-annual basis as an adjunct to the information disseminated at public meetings. The focus has primarily been on plan program product updates. The content and format of the MPO Newsletter was substantially revised in 1999, and was further given a "new look" format in order to ensure that standards of readability, thoroughness of coverage of issues, and quality comparison with the publications of similar agencies are being properly followed. As part of the new look, the newsletter was renamed "Transportation Talk", and has achieved professional level of content and printing. Also, all newsletters are immediately posted on the MPO's web site. By coordinating the timing and content of the newsletters, the publications also serve as effective meeting/workshop handouts.

Staff is also exploring the publishing of the Newsletter in a local newspaper to achieve maximum exposure and effectiveness. Alternative formats will continue to be investigated to determine suitability of application on a regular or as-needed basis. This would include publication of an MPO Annual Report document, or special newsletters/brochures in support of the LRTP review and adoption process. Two newsletters were published during the Year 2020 LRTP. During 2003/04, at least three newsletters will be published containing information regarding the 2025 LRTP Update. The MPO should also look into the feasibility/cost of publishing an annual report following final approval of the Plan Update.

The MPO is committed to publishing newsletters on a quarterly basis at a minimum, and when appropriate, will continue to publish special editions of newsletters devoted to major MPO projects as well as ongoing programs.

Citizens Transportation Survey

From 1997 to 2003, the MPO published an annual Citizens Transportation Survey in the local editions of both major newspapers in Hernando County. The number of responses received each year ranged from 400 to 600, representing a very high level of interest in a county the size of Hernando. Responses are tabulated and statistically analyzed. Summary charts and comments were then presented to the MPO Board for its consideration. The MPO will consider reactivation of the Citizen Transportation Survey during development of the updated 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan.

MPO Web Site

The MPO's web site became fully operational in December of 1998. The MPO's intent in creating a web site is to provide user friendly data and information about the various MPO related transportation functions and activities. It is also designed to be interactive, providing public input and query capability. In addition to meeting schedules, agenda information, adopted plans, plan update information and traffic data, the site is currently hosting an electronic version of MPO newsletters.

By speeding up the posting of materials on the web, the MPO can provide additional opportunities for meaningful citizen and agency comment. Also, use of the web for conducting surveys and soliciting comment has proven successful in many areas. The MPO should continue to look for ways to directly involve the citizenry in the planning process by using electronic surveys and opinion polls.

Public Media News Releases

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 has provided additional public awareness of transportation issues. From time to time, the press will also cover meetings of the MPO review committees.

Public Inquiries

The MPO staff is available for handling all public comments, questions, and interest on all issues

relevant to the MPO planning process. Calls are received daily from the public with regards to transportation-related issues.

Expense of Documentation

Currently, the MPO expends approximately \$20,000 annually for document publication and distribution to the public, state agencies, board and committee members, and all other participants involved in the MPO process. The public is no longer assessed a fee for document reproduction.

Regional Coordination

Hernando County is within the Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council (WRPC) district. Although the WRPC has a representative on the TAC, due to the close proximity and working relationship with Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough Counties, all within the Department of Transportation District Seven, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC) has also been involved in many of the transportation planning efforts of the MPO.

A great deal of the routine regional coordination for the MPO's program occurs at the level of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC not only includes representatives from other local governments within Hernando County, but also representatives from the FDOT District Seven office and from other state and regional agencies.

Both MPO staff and a designated MPO Board representative participate in the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) process created cooperatively by the six MPOs of West Central Florida; FDOT Districts One and Seven; and the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, the Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. Many of the activities of the CCC parallel the plan development and review processes followed by the individual MPOs. This includes review of planning materials by the public. Additionally, much of the regional planning/coordination for transportation matters is provided by the Florida Department of Transportation District Seven Office in Tampa. This is particularly significant for the provision of technical assistance in support of the MPO program.

Until its dissolution, the MPO also regularly participated in the activities of the Tampa Bay Commuter Rail Authority and had appointed a member to that board. However, there have been recent signs of the Authority being reactivated, possibly in the form of a Regional Transit Authority. The Hernando MPO will continue to monitor the activities of the Commuter Rail Authority or its

successor organization.

The MPO also coordinates at the staff level with the Bay Area Commuter Services regional rideshare agency.

Regional and statewide organizations will continue to be brought into all stages of plan development; in particular on issues which will have an impact on these organizations and where their assistance would promote a regional perspective. The need for expanded public participation on regional issues has been addressed through the cooperative regional coordination process set up by the MPOs and FDOT. This would include expanded meeting notification and possible hearings. The MPO also regularly participates on the statewide MPO Advisory Council, at both the Governing Board and Staff Directors levels.

In September 2000, the CCC adopted its Public Involvement Program (PIP). The Regional PIP lays out a comprehensive series of citizen participation strategies have become a continuing part of the MPOs' regional coordination process. These strategies consisted of:

- Expansion of the Joint Citizens Advisory Committee
- Creation of a CCC web site
- Publication of newsletters and brochures
- Public input data sharing among CCC member organizations
- Media outreach activities

The Hernando MPO does not yet participate in the regional CAC currently administered by the Hillsborough and Pinellas MPOs. However, on several occasions, Hernando MPO staff has made presentations for the Joint CAC as requested by the Hillsborough and Pinellas MPOs.

As a result of the MPO reapportionment process, the Hernando MPO has agree to fully participate in the coordinated regional planning program of the CCC. Furthermore, the CCC has been directed to develop a public involvement plan to show how the citizens of West Central Florida can be more effectively involved in the development of regional plans and programs. Use of the CCC's web site at www.ccctransportation.org has been the preferred means of disseminating information on regional planning activities over this wide geographic area. Additionally, the CCC publishes a brochure called "West Central Florida Mobility" and a quarterly newsletter, "Regional Connections." Both of these documents are distributed throughout West Central Florida by CCC members.

In June 2002, the CCC published a summary report of its "2025 Regional Long Range

Transportation Plan.” This document explains how the CCC’s coordinated planning process operates, and how the CCC created the first LRTP for all of West Central Florida.

During the recent 2025 LRTP Update, Citrus County was included in FDOT’s Regional Transportation Analysis process. MPO staff will again schedule meetings with adjacent governments during the second 2025 LRTP update, and will notify adjacent governments that are not part of the CCC or Regional Transportation Analysis process prior to taking actions that may affect their jurisdictions.

Environmental Justice Program

Since the adoption of the last PIP in 2000, the Environmental Justice Program has become an established part of the MPO’s public involvement process. As shown in Appendix A, 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, as illustrated in Figures 4 and 5.

In order to identify area in which to focus the MPO’s efforts re: Environmental Justice and Title VI, Year 2000 Census data was queried to pinpoint block groups with high levels of low-income, minority, and elderly (65+) populations.

To date, the MPO has held four Environmental Justice Workshops, either during development of the 2025 LRTP, or during the 2002 and 2003 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. Formatted as an informal discussion, the workshop included a presentation on environmental justice and the long-range transportation plan describing the specifics of environmental justice and an overview of Hernando County demographics. Maps were also provided to the participants to illustrate where improvements are planned and to show demographic trends. Finally, a comprehensive review of the

**Figure 4
MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN HERNANDO COUNTY**

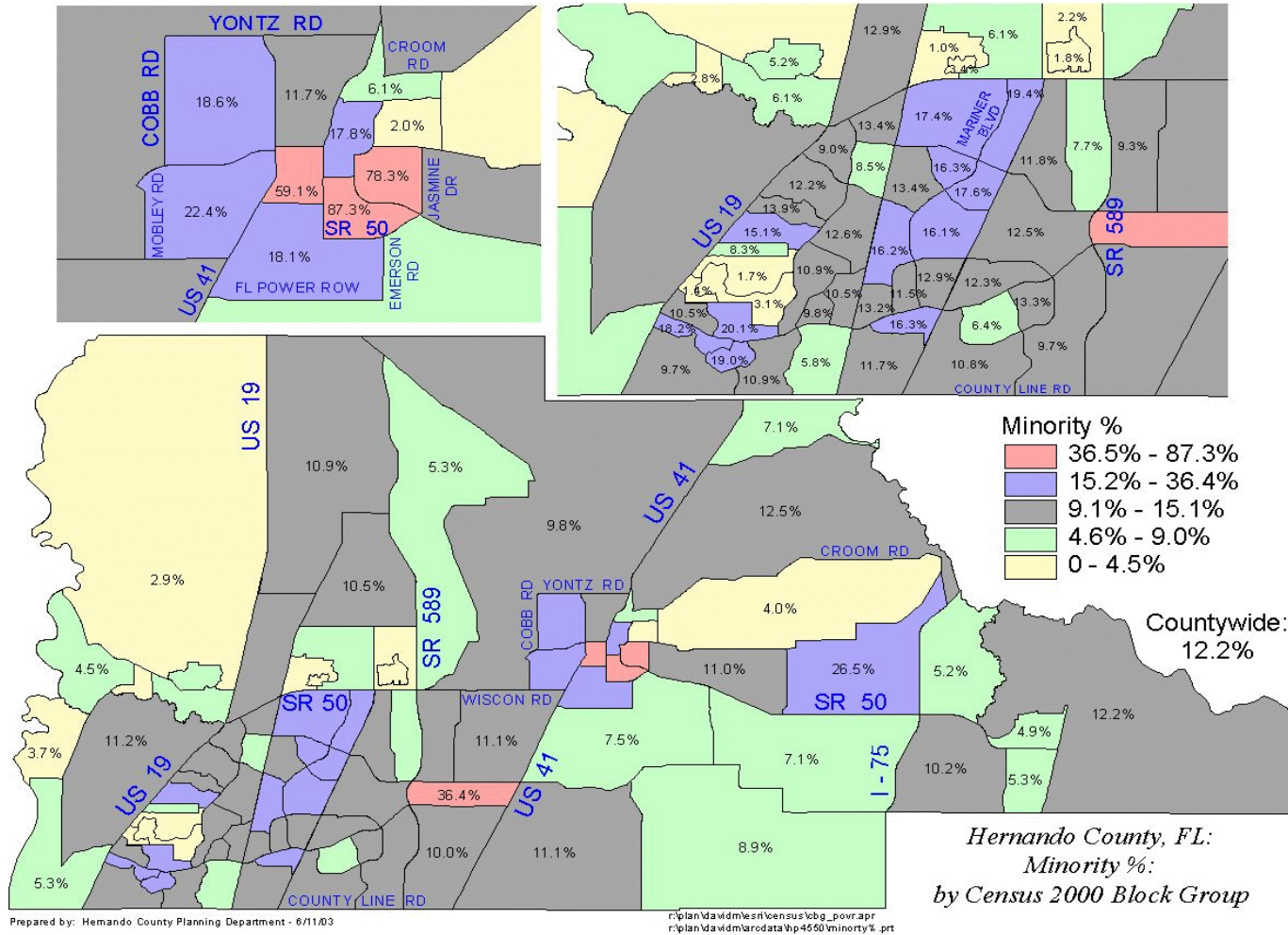
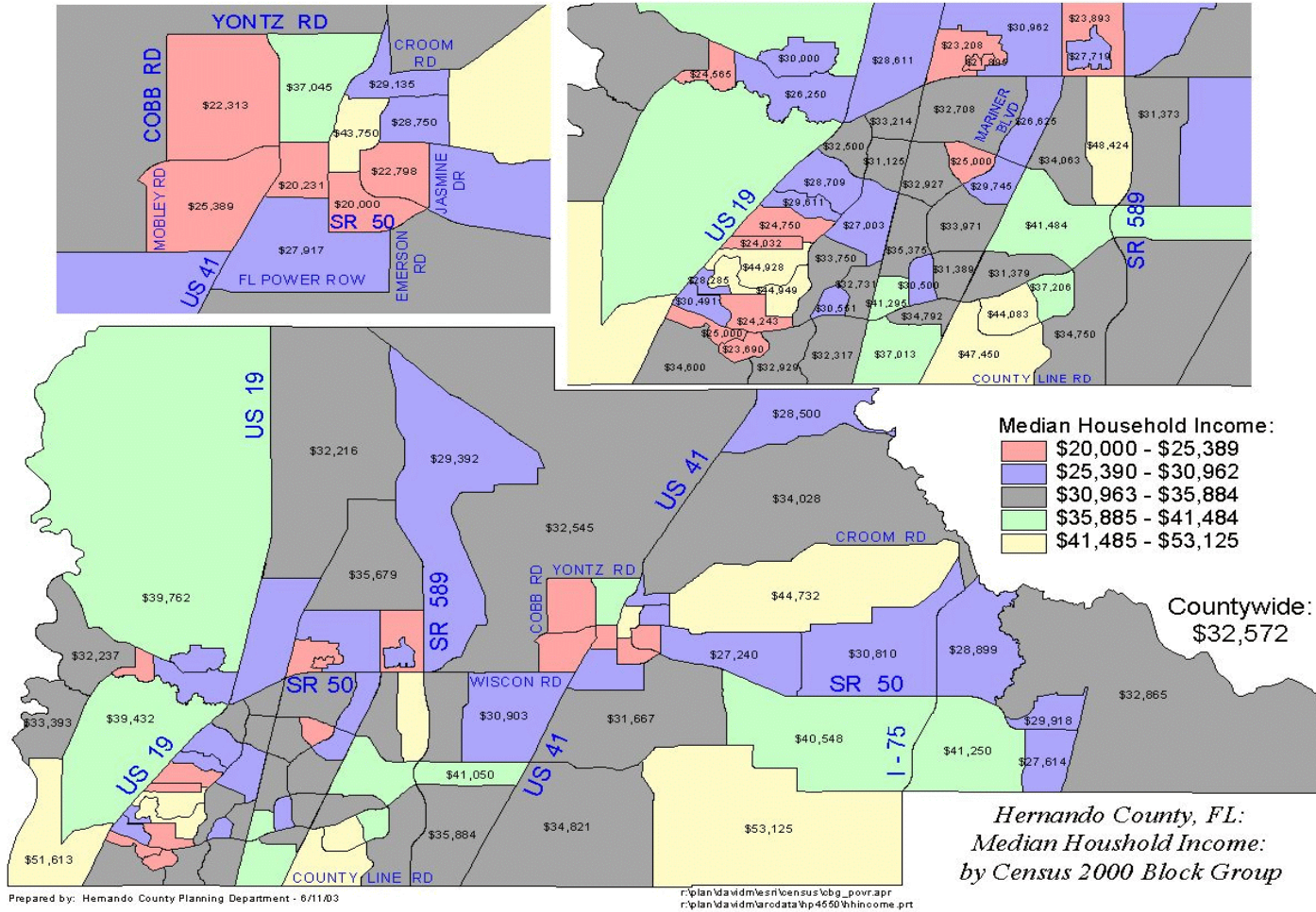


Figure 5
LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES IN HERNANDO COUNTY



MPO's transit planning program was provided to give participants an idea of the direction of the public transportation 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. Most of the concerns are for Hernando County to provide a more comprehensive public transportation for residents. Many of the low-income families find auto ownership cost prohibitive and rely on public transportation, pedestrian paths, and bicycles to meet their transportation needs. As a result, few comments were received regarding the impacts of potential roadway improvements on minority and low-income communities, with the exception of making roadways more transit and pedestrian friendly. A summary of the major comments made by low-income and minority participants during the LRTP Update included:

- Expand fixed route transit routing, provide stops at social service offices, and expand hours of operation to assist employment and welfare-to-work programs;
- Pedestrian safety concerns and including project to provide sidewalks along several roadways;
- Include road projects with positive impacts on low-income and minority populations.

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. This included a presentation at the general meeting of the Hernando County NAACP in Brooksville. Also, a questionnaire was distributed at all environmental justice events. Answers were compiled and presented directly to the MPO Board. Specific recommendations included:

- Additional route/stops within minority neighborhoods
- Better access to medical/health facilities
- Need sidewalks with low-income area for accessing transit stops
- Improved accessibility for elderly and disabled
- Users need to get to educational facilities and to social service agencies

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

Employment of Visualization Tehnciques and Availability of Electronic Documents via the Internet

The MPO is committed to providing visual aids, such as large maps, informational handouts, PowerPoint presentations, etc., at public workshops, public hearings, and other meetings as appropriate, as art of the public involvement process (SAFETEA-LU Compliance Issue #10).

MPO Consultation with State and Local Agencies

The MPO is committed to consulting with appropriate state and local agencies in order to coordinate the development of plans and programs with concerns such as; environmental protection, tribal government, wildlife management, land management, and historic preservation. Consultation shall involve: 1) a comparison of the MPO's LRTP with state conservation plans or maps, if available, or 2) comparison of the LRTP with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

Examples of these agencies include, but are not limited to the following:

The Florida Department of Transportation

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Florida Fish and Wildlife conservation Commission

Southwest Florida Water management District

State Bureau of Historic Preservation

Section VI

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCEDURES

Due in part to the increased requirements for public participation by federal legislation, the MPO expanded its public participation procedures in 1994 to allow for additional public input and to ensure that the public take its place as a key player in the planning and decision-making process. As mentioned earlier, this process has been reviewed on a regular basis to ensure its continued effectiveness.

Policy Regarding Public Access to the Planning Process

The following will constitute the general policy to guide activities of the staff and Board of the MPO in implementing a public participation program under the federal mandate:

It shall be the policy of the Hernando County Metropolitan Planning Organization that all segments of the population of the County will have all reasonable access to the technical and policy processes which support the development of plans, programs and policies of the MPO. To this end, the MPO will endeavor to directly involve the public in the decision-making process during all phases of the planning process.

Annual Review of Public Involvement Strategies

In order to ensure that the public involvement strategies identified in this report are in line with the current profile of the citizenry of Hernando County, the MPO intends to perform an update of its public involvement strategies on an annual basis. Furthermore, as part of the update process the MPO held a public hearing on the results of the update and on any suggested modifications to its public involvement strategies. This review constitutes the second comprehensive reassessment of the effectiveness of the original Public Involvement Process. Review and action items included related to the annual review of strategies include:

Action Item: The MPO will continue to conduct an annual review and update of its adopted public involvement strategies.

Action Item: As part of this update, the MPO will hold a public hearing prior to adopting any recommended changes to its public involvement strategies.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The creation of the CAC was the MPO's first actual step toward conferring additional public input into the planning process. Use of the CAC for the Year 2015 LRTP and subsequent LRTP Updates, as well as being at the forefront of transit planning activities, have been the committee's most significant activities since its formation. The CAC's composition takes into account the type of representation which addresses the county's population, race, gender, and area of residence. The CAC is now firmly established as the lead committee for providing citizen input for subsequent LRTP updates and for other planning studies. All CAC recommendations are given final review before the MPO Board review. Action items related to establishing and maintaining the CAC included:

Action Item: The CAC will continue to be committed to seeking out representation which reflects the County's demographic composition. To this end, on a regular basis the CAC will review its membership composition and procedures and make recommendations to the MPO Board on possible methods to expand/strengthen community participation.

Plans and Documents

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. Action items related to plans and documents of the MPO include:

Action Item: The public will have access to *all* planning documents for review and comment throughout the year 15 to 30 days prior to each meeting and/or public hearing, if permitted by federal/state adoption deadlines.

Action Item: The MPO will investigate use of its web site to quickly post documents and other publications during the plan development process.

Action Item: Ensure full participation by all affected agencies and provide a review period for FHWA and FTA during the annual MPO certification process.

Public Hearings/Workshops

The development of the 2025 LRTP earmarked target dates for each step of Plan development. Upon completion of each major milestone of plan preparation, a public hearing or workshop was held to inform the public of the progress to date. These workshops allowed for regular updates on the progress of the plan and also allowed continuous public input into the planning process. Of even greater importance, the use of two Consensus Building Workshops at key points of the Plan's development, gave the citizenry and even stronger voice in how resources should be allocated to provide mobility to all segments of the population.

The MPO will maintain a strong commitment to its Environmental Justice program, and will investigate more effective ways to reach the low-income and minority populations of the County. Keeping current demographic information in order to accurately locate this segment of the community is also an important part of the Environmental Justice program.

During the adoption phase of the LRTP, public hearings were held and ample public notification was provided to ensure that all segments of the county were notified and able to review and comment on the document. The county is currently divided into three main population centers; Spring Hill (west side); Downtown Brooksville (central); and Ridge Manor (east side).

Currently underway, the second update of the 2025 LRTP Update will also highlight project milestones for which public review and comment will be actively sought. Action items related to public hearings and workshops include:

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

Action Item: Local public hearings could serve to promote active citizen participation if held in each respective area. Target areas relevant to subject matter should be identified for the purpose of holding meetings at suitable locations within these locales.

Action Item: All substantial revisions or concerns of the public will be documented for later discussions. All of the public's issues and concerns raised at previous meetings will be addressed in the following meeting and changes which were undertaken to address these concerns. This will occur at all stages of document preparation, public hearings, and workshops.

Action Item: Each year the public participation and hearing process will be 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.

Action Item: The MPO will investigate effective means to reach the low-income and minority communities of Hernando County in order to increase their participation in the development of plans and programs.

Action Item: Demographic characteristics of the community will be periodically reviewed to ensure that segments of Hernando County's population which have been traditionally under-served are brought into the transportation planning process through the MPO's Environmental Justice Program.

MPO Newsletter

At the present, the MPO Newsletter is the principal document which is distributed within the community on a quarterly basis. As such, it is one of the primary means through which individual citizens and community groups remain apprized of MPO activities. For this reason, the previous document format was significantly revised to give it s "new look", thus making it more readable and informative. Also, distribution methods will be periodically reviewed to ascertain its continuing effectiveness in providing a high level of community awareness of the planning process, particularly to segments of the community that may have been under-served in the past. Action items related to publication of the MPO Newsletter include:

Action Item: The distribution/ mailing list for the Newsletter will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure adequate coverage for all segments of the community.

Action Item: The content, format and frequency of the MPO Newsletter will be reviewed periodically to ensure that standards of readability, thoroughness of coverage of issues, and quality comparison with the publications of similar agencies are being properly followed.

Action Item: Alternative formats will be investigated to determine suitability of application on a regular or as-needed basis. This would include publication of an MPO Annual Report document, or special newsletters/brochures in support of the LRTP review and adoption process.

Action Item: Target newsletter distribution in areas with high concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Development

The MPO first adopted a Long Range Transportation Plan (for a 2015 horizon year) in 1995. Subsequent three-year LRTP updates were performed, the most recent being the 2025 LRTP Update in 2001 as required under TEA-21, the federal act in place at that time. The MPO continues to extensively use the CAC throughout the planning process, starting with review and comment on the MPO's Long Range Goals and Objectives. The CAC continued to stay active during the Plan's development by reviewing network alternatives, system performance, and funding/revenue options.

It is anticipated that the CAC will continue to be on the leading edge of community review for the current 2025 Plan Update. To this end, the CAC will be called upon to review all plan processes and products as they are available. As in the past, the CAC will meet on a regular basis in order to meet the completion schedule for the updated LRTP. The public participation process is anticipated to formally begin in November 2003 with a comprehensive review of the MPO's goals, objectives and policies that will guide the plan update process.

Hernando County is perhaps unique in that an informal interaction has evolved between the CAC and the Technical Advisory Committee, as well as with other committees and working groups. When appropriate, this relationship has been fostered through holding joint meetings and workshops, allowing each group to be aware of the positions of others. Not only during development of the 2025 LRTP, but also during follow-up activities such as the Congestion/Mobility Management System and the Transit Development Plan were joint meeting formats pursued.

Alternative methods to involve the public when determining long range transportation needs and funding priorities will also be considered. The Consensus Building Workshop held during the last Plan update were excellent examples of the public having effective input that shaped the content of the LRTP. Environmental Justice workshops will also be an important component of the public involvement strategy.

The MPO will also continue to work closely with the Florida Department of Transportation District Seven Office during development of the 2025 LRTP. As with the previous LRTP, the MPO will again be participating in the Regional Transportation Analysis (RTA) project being conducted by FDOT.

In order to meet state and federal time frames established to support the LRTP development process, the MPO will develop a schedule of milestone activities that will be followed to the greatest extent possible. Of particular note are the public workshops that will be held prior to the adoption of the Policy Constrained Needs Plan and the Cost Affordable Plan. Specifically, public input will be sought in regards to the impact of proposed roadway improvements on the community. Through the MPO's Environmental Justice program, special attention will also be paid to involving those segments of the community that are traditionally under- represented in the planning process, and the impact that highway widenings will have on those groups and on the Brooksville downtown area.

The timely dissemination of Plan alternatives that are being considered can be effectuated by publication on the MPO's web site. Staff should endeavor to post segments of the LRTP, including maps, tables and text, that will be considered for policy action by the MPO Board.

The future role of mass transit and the means for securing needed revenues will also be an emphasis area for community involvement. Public involvement activities during the Interim TDP and the major TDP Update identified a large portion of Hernando County's population as being demographically oriented toward mass transit use. Community participation strategies should seek to further identify the mobility needs of the population that would be best served by modes other than the private automobile.

Action items for the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan Update include:

Action Item: Keep the CAC in the forefront of community involvement during all phases of the Plan's development and seek review of all plan processes and products as they are available. The CAC will, at a minimum, meet on a bi-monthly basis during the LRTP update.

Action Item: When appropriate, schedule joint committee meetings and workshops to review 2025 LRTP activities and products.

Action Item: Continue to work closely with the Florida Department of Transportation District Seven Office during development of the 2025 LRTP and participate in the Regional Transportation Analysis (RTA).

Action Item: As part of the LRTP Public Participation Plan, develop a schedule of milestone activities; particularly for the public workshops to be held prior to the adoption of plan elements.

Action Item: Seek public input regarding community impacts due to roadway improvements, and pay special attention to involving traditionally under-served segments of the community through the Environmental Justice program.

Action Item: On a timely basis, post items on the MPO's web site that will be considered for MPO action, such as maps and other transportation alternatives that are to be incorporated into the LRTP.

Action Item: Design public involvement activities that will further identify the mobility needs of the County's transit dependent population.

Regional Coordination

Coordination of planning programs among the six MPOs in West Central Florida has become an important emphasis area for the region. Hernando County's regional coordination efforts have been consistently augmented through additional notification being sent to the Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council and the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.

MPO staff have been extensively involved in the MPO Staff Directors Coordination Team of the West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) consisting of MPO Directors and staff within FDOT Districts 1 and 7, including the Hernando MPO, Hillsborough MPO, Pasco MPO, Polk TPO, Pinellas MPO, and the Sarasota/Manatee MPO. Additionally, representatives from the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and the Tampa Bay Partnership participate at the staff level. Recently, the CCC held a joint meeting with the Central Florida MPO Alliance in order to expand ties with surrounding regions.

FDOT also provides staff liaisons that are continually coordinating activities of the state with those of local agencies concerning major planning projects of the MPO. With the pending adoption in late 2003 of an expanded CCC Public Involvement Program, it is expected that the public participation component of the CCC process will expand as planning products are developed. Usually, action by the CCC has been followed by a ratification action by the affected MPOs. This action would be subject to the regular public participation process described in this document.

Action items related to regional coordination include:

Action Item: Further involvement of regional organizations will be sought at all stages of plan development, and in particular on issues which will have an impact on these organizations and where their assistance would promote a regional perspective. The need

for expanded public participation on regional issues will continue to be addressed through the cooperative regional coordination process set up by the MPOs and FDOT. This would include expanded meeting notification and possible hearings.

Action Item: Adjacent counties and communities will be notified of projects within the Tampa Bay Area which impact their areas, and will be ensured participation in the planning process through discussions and input.

Action Item: Participate in activities defined in the CCC's enhanced Public Involvement Program to be adopted prior to the end of 2003.

MPO Consultation with State and Local Agencies

The MPO is committed to consulting with state and federal agencies to ensure that plans and program have received proper review during their development. Specifically, this review shall look at the Plan's potential impact on the environmental and community resources of Hernando County. Such review must be early and continuing to guarantee that planned facility improvements do not result in unacceptable impacts on the County's natural or historic features.

Action Item: Consult with appropriate state and local agencies to coordinate the development of plans and programs with concerns such as; environmental protection, tribal government, wildlife management, land management, and historic preservation.

Action Item: Consultation shall involve: 1) a comparison of the MPO's LRTP with state conservation plans or maps, if available, or 2) comparison of the LRTP with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

Employment of Visualization Tehnciques and Availability of Electronic Documents via the Internet

The MPO is committed to providing visual aids, such as large maps, informational handouts, PowerPoint presentation, etc., at public workshops, public hearing,s and other meetings as appropriate.

Although the MPO currently uses a variety of visualization techniques for presenting information at Board meetings and at public events such as workshops and hearings, there are many new and effective techniques that should be explored. The MPO also maintains an active web site on which

documents, maps and other background materials are regularly posted.

Action Item: Provide visual aids such as large maps, informational handouts, Power Point presentations, etc., at public workshops, public hearings, and other meetings as appropriate.

Action Item: Ensure the prompt posting of documents for review on the MPO's web site.

Section VII

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

Following is a synopsis of the action items contained in this document. Specific actions taken are discussed in the following section.

Summary of Action Items

Action Item: The MPO will continue to conduct an annual review and update of its adopted public involvement strategies.

Action Item: As part of this update, the MPO will hold a public hearing prior to adopting any recommended changes to its public involvement strategies.

Action Item: The CAC will continue to be committed to seeking out representation which reflects the County's demographic composition. To this end, on a regular basis the CAC will review its membership composition and procedures and make recommendations to the MPO Board on possible methods to expand/strengthen community participation.

Action Item: The public will have access to *all* planning documents for review and comment throughout the year 15 to 30 days prior to each meeting and/or public hearing, if permitted by federal/state adoption deadlines.

Action Item: The MPO will investigate use of its web site to quickly post documents and other publications during the plan development process.

Action Item: Ensure full participation by all affected agencies and provide a review period for FHWA and FTA during the annual MPO certification process.

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

Action Item: Local public hearings could serve to promote active citizen participation if held in each respective area. Target areas relevant to subject matter should be identified for the purpose of holding meetings at suitable locations within these locales.

Action Item: All substantial revisions or concerns of the public will be documented for later discussions. All of the public's issues and concerns raised at previous meetings will be addressed in the following meeting and changes which were undertaken to address these concerns. This will occur at all stages of document preparation, public hearings, and workshops.

Action Item: Each year the public participation and hearing process will be 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.

Action Item: The MPO will investigate effective means to reach the low-income and minority communities of Hernando County in order to increase their participation in the development of plans and programs through the Environmental Justice program.

Action Item: Demographic characteristics of the community will be periodically reviewed to ensure that segments of Hernando County's population which have been traditionally under-served are brought into the transportation planning process through the MPO's Environmental Justice Program.

Action Item: The distribution/ mailing list for the Newsletter will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure adequate coverage for all segments of the community.

Action Item: The content, format and frequency of the MPO Newsletter will be reviewed periodically to ensure that standards of readability, thoroughness of coverage of issues, and quality comparison with the publications of similar agencies are being properly followed.

Action Item: Alternative formats will be investigated to determine suitability of application on a regular or as-needed basis. This would include publication of an MPO Annual Report document, or special newsletters/brochures in support of the LRTP review and adoption process.

Action Item: Target newsletter distribution in areas with high concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations.

Action Item: Keep the CAC in the forefront of community involvement during all phases of the Plan's development and seek review of all plan processes and products as they are available. The CAC will, at a minimum, meet on a bi-monthly basis during the LRTP update.

Action Item: When appropriate, schedule joint committee meetings and workshops to review 2025 LRTP activities and products.

Action Item: Continue to work closely with the Florida Department of Transportation District Seven Office during development of the 2025 LRTP and participate in the Regional Transportation Analysis (RTA).

Action Item: As part of the LRTP Public Participation Plan, develop a schedule of milestone activities; particularly for the public workshops to be held prior to the adoption of plan elements. Seek public input regarding community impacts due to roadway improvements, and pay special attention to involving traditionally under-served segments of the community.

Action Item: Seek public input regarding community impacts due to roadway improvements, and pay special attention to involving traditionally under-served segments of the community through the Environmental Justice program.

Action Item: On a timely basis, post items on the MPO's web site that will be considered for MPO action, such as maps and other transportation alternatives that are to be incorporated into the LRTP.

Action Item: Design public involvement activities that will further identify the mobility needs of the County's transit dependent population.

Action Item: Further involvement of regional organizations will be sought at all stages of plan development, and in particular on issues which will have an impact on these organizations and where their assistance would promote a regional perspective. The need for expanded public participation on regional issues will continue to be addressed through the cooperative regional coordination process set up by the MPOs and FDOT. This would include expanded meeting notification and possible hearings.

Action Item: Adjacent counties and communities will be notified of projects within the Tampa Bay Area which impact their areas, and will be ensured participation in the planning process through discussions and input.

Action Item: Participate in activities defined in the CCC's enhanced regional adopted Public Involvement Program.

Action Item: Consult with appropriate state and local agencies to coordinate the development of plans and programs with concerns such as; environmental protection, tribal government, wildlife management, land management, and historic preservation.

Action Item: Consultation shall involve: 1) a comparison of the MPO's LRTP with state conservation plans or maps, if available, or 2) comparison of the LRTP with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

Action Item: Provide visual aids such as large maps, informational handouts, Power Point presentations, etc., at public workshops, public hearings, and other meetings as appropriate.

Action Item: Ensure the prompt posting of documents for review on the MPO's web site.

Section VIII

EVALUATION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

The scheduled update of the MPO's LRTP has necessitated this major review of the Public Involvement Process. The chart shown in Figure 3 compares actions taken by the MPO and staff for each of the action items summarized in the previous section. Where appropriate, additional required actions have been developed for committee review.

Figure 3
EVALUATION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

ACTION ITEM	ACTION TAKEN	REQUIRED ACTION
<i>Annual Review of Public Involvement Strategies</i>		
The MPO will continue to conduct an annual update of its adopted public involvement strategies.	A comprehensive review of the MPO's public involvement program was conducted prior to the PIP's re-adoption in 2000/2001.	In 2002 staff conducted its annual review of the quality and level of participation in the MPO's public involvement program and reported the results to the MPO Board, along with recommendations for possible program changes.
As part of this update, the MPO will hold a public hearing prior to adopting any recommended changes to its public involvement strategies.	A comprehensive review of the public involvement program is currently being conducted.	Two public hearings have been scheduled prior to adoption of the updated Public Involvement Process.
<i>Citizens Advisory Committee</i>		
The CAC will continue to be committed to seeking out those, groups, and demographic composition. To this end, on a regular basis the CAC will review its membership composition and procedures and make recommendations to the MPO Board on possible methods to expand/strengthen community participation.	The CAC conducted a review of its membership based upon the 2000 Census.	Staff will periodically initiate a comprehensive review of the CAC's attendance and membership composition relative to the demographics of Hernando County. During all MPO transit planning activities, the role of the CAC will function as the Community Review Committee.

ACTION ITEM	ACTION TAKEN	REQUIRED ACTION
Plans and Documents		
The public will have access to <i>all</i> planning documents for review and comment throughout the year 15 to 30 days prior to each meeting and/or public hearing, if permitted by federal/state adoption deadlines.	Staff has endeavored to have planning documents available for inspection at least 15 days prior to meetings and hearings.	Review procedures to attempt to have documents available 30 days prior to meetings.
Ensure full participation by all affected agencies and provide a review period for FHWA and FTA during the annual MPO certification process.	During each cycle, the appropriate state and federal agencies are afforded full review and comment opportunity through the FDOT's re-certification process.	Annually review certification procedures with the FDOT District Office to ensure adequate agency participation.
The MPO will investigate use of its web site to quickly post documents and other publications during the plan development process.	The MPO has expanded the use of PDF files to post documents quickly on the web.	Schedule web posting prior to decision points during the development of plans and programs.
Public Hearings/Workshops		
The current policy utilized for the notification/ advertisement of public hearings should be reviewed for its effectiveness in soliciting public participation. Possible alternative methods should be reviewed for cost and population type/size targeted.	<p>Larger newspaper notification formats are now regularly used (up to quarter page ads) in local newspapers as an alternative to classified ads.</p> <p>Community and business groups are directly notified by mail and telephone of special workshops and meetings.</p> <p>Public service announcements on community access television are now used for hearings and workshops.</p>	<p>Continue to explore additional methods for advertisement of meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Posting of meeting notices on the MPO web site. -Encourage notices in community and business newsletters. -Work directly with the press to have articles published during the LRTP update.
Local public hearings could serve to promote active citizen participation if held in each respective area. Target areas relevant to subject matter should be identified for the purpose of holding meetings at suitable locations within these locales.	<p>Public hearings, workshops and meetings are regularly held during MPO meetings. A fully advertised public hearing will be held prior to adoption of the TDP update.</p> <p>When appropriate, meetings and workshops have been conducted within the Spring Hill, Brooksville, and Ridge Manor areas.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>During the LRTP update hold at least one public information workshop at an alternative location such as a shopping center or other appropriate activity center.</p>

ACTION ITEM	ACTION TAKEN	REQUIRED ACTION
<p>All substantial revisions or concerns of the public will be documented for later discussions. All of the public's issues and concerns raised at previous meetings will be addressed at the following MPO meeting, including changes which were undertaken to address these concerns. This will occur at all stages of document preparation, public hearings, and workshops.</p>	<p>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 meetings following the meeting(s) at which comments were received.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Each year the public participation and hearing process will be 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.</p>	<p>A comprehensive review of the MPO's public involvement program was last conducted prior to the LRTP Update in late 1997.</p>	<p>Staff has initiated a thorough review of the quality and level of participation in the MPO's public involvement program, and will report the results to the MPO Board, along with recommendations for possible program changes.</p>
<p>Demographic characteristics of the community will be reviewed to ensure that segments of Hernando County's population, including those which have been traditionally under-served, are brought into the transportation planning process.</p>	<p>Using 1990 Census data and available data updates, staff has performed an interim analysis of the makeup of the County's population.</p>	<p>In conjunction with 2000 Census data, staff will initiate a thorough review of the demographic characteristics of Hernando County's population.</p>
<p><i>MPO Newsletter</i></p>		
<p>The distribution/ mailing list for the Newsletter will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure adequate coverage for all segments of the community.</p>	<p>Prior to the last LRTP Update, the MPO's mailing list was extensively reviewed and updated.</p>	<p>Prior to the 2025 LRTP Update, staff will review and access the surface mailing list and add e-mail addresses as appropriate.</p>
<p>The content, format and frequency of the MPO Newsletter will be reviewed periodically to ensure that standards of readability, thoroughness of coverage of issues, and quality comparison with the publications of similar agencies are being properly followed.</p>	<p>The Newsletter has been produced on a semi-annual basis as an adjunct to the information disseminated at public meetings. The focus has primarily been on plan program product updates.</p> <p>Due to technical difficulties, newsletters had not been published on the MPO's web site</p>	<p>Explore publishing an MPO annual report at least once each year in the local newspaper to achieve maximum exposure and effectiveness.</p> <p>Continue to post newsletters on the MPO's web site, including maps.</p>

ACTION ITEM	ACTION TAKEN	REQUIRED ACTION
<p>Alternative formats will be investigated to determine suitability of application on a regular or as-needed basis. This would include publication of an MPO Annual Report document, or special newsletters/brochures in support of the LRTP review and adoption process.</p>	<p>The newsletter have been given a “new look” format to incorporate a more readable and informative format than previously used.</p> <p>The MPO has published a newsletter on a quarterly basis for the past year and a half.</p> <p>Two newsletters addressing long range planning issues were published during the 2025 LRTP Update.</p> <p>For six years the MPO published a Citizens Transportation Survey in both major newspapers in Hernando County.</p>	<p>Continue to publish special editions of newsletters devoted to major MPO projects, particularly the LRTP Update, as well as ongoing programs.</p> <p>Commit to publishing Newsletters on a quarterly basis at a minimum.</p> <p>Look into the feasibility/cost of publishing an annual report following final approval of the Plan Update.</p> <p>Consider republication of the Citizens Transportation Survey.</p>
<p>Target newsletter distribution in areas with high concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations.</p>	<p>The MPO has made contact with several groups which represent the low-income and minority community, predominantly with the City of Brooksville.</p>	<p>Develop a definitive list of groups, agencies and individuals from the low-income and minority communities.</p> <p>Include articles in the newsletter that specifically target the needs and interests of these groups.</p>
<p>Long Range Transportation Plan Update</p>		
<p>Action Item: Keep the CAC in the forefront of community involvement during all phases of the Plan’s development and seek review of all plan processes and products as they are available. The CAC will, at a minimum, meet on a bi-monthly basis during the LRTP update.</p>	<p>The CAC has been at the forefront of community involvement for the review of all LRTP Updates.</p>	<p>Have the CAC assist in development of the LRTP Public Participation Plan.</p> <p>Involve the CAC in the review of LRTP input materials and alternative testing.</p>
<p>When appropriate, schedule joint committee meetings and workshops to review 2025 LRTP activities and products.</p>	<p>Joint committee meeting were scheduled several times during the 2020 LRTP Update and the TDP Update.</p>	<p>Continue to review the effectiveness of holding joint committee workshops in order to share viewpoints.</p>
<p>Continue to work closely with the Florida Department of Transportation District Seven Office during development of the 2025 LRTP and participate in the Regional Transportation Analysis (RTA).</p>	<p>MPO staff currently serves on the Technical Review Team of the RTA and as a staff liaison with the CCC’s Staff Directors Coordination Team.</p>	<p>Staff will continue to participate on the Technical Review Team of the RTA, and will coordinate all plan development activities with that group.</p>

ACTION ITEM	ACTION TAKEN	REQUIRED ACTION
As part of the LRTP Public Participation Plan, develop a schedule of milestone activities; particularly for the public workshops to be held prior to the adoption of plan elements.	A Public Participation Plan was prepared for the 2025 LRTP Update and approved by the MPO.	As soon as possible, develop a Public Participation Plan for the 2025 LRTP Update and have the MPO review and adopt following a public hearing.
Seek public input regarding community impacts due to roadway improvements, and pay special attention to involving traditionally under-served segments of the community through the Environmental Justice program.	Community workshops have been held at key points in the LRTP development process, including a Consensus Building Workshop and Environmental Justice Workshop.	Hold meetings and workshops specifically designed to obtain public reaction to highway improvements. Focus on the needs of the minority and low-income population through the Environmental Justice program during development of the LRTP.
On a timely basis, post items on the MPO's web site that will be considered for MPO action, such as maps and other transportation alternatives that are to be incorporated into the LRTP.	The MPO's web site has been expanded to include documents approved by the MPO.	Post items being considered for review and/or action whenever possible, based upon time constraints.
Design public involvement activities that will further identify the mobility needs of the County's transit dependent population.	Pinpointing the characteristics and needs of the transit dependent population took place during the TDP and the TOP update.	Apply comments and preferences regarding mobility from the Citizen Transportation Surveys. Include materials regarding mobility needs and deficiencies during public meetings and workshops.
Regional Coordination		
Further involve regional organizations at all stages of plan development, and in particular regarding issues which will have an impact on these organizations where their assistance would promote a regional perspective. Expanded public participation on regional issues will continue to be addressed through the cooperative regional coordination process set up by the MPOs and FDOT, including expanded meeting notification and possible hearings.	The MPO continues to be an active participant in the West Central Florida Chair's Coordinating Committee (CCC), with regular attendance at Policy Board and staff coordination meetings. The MPO also regularly participates on the MPO Advisory Council, at both the Governing Board and Staff Directors levels. MPO staff has made presentations for the Joint CAC as requested for Hillsborough and Pinellas MPOs.	The Hernando MPO does not participate in the regional CAC currently administered by the Hillsborough and Pinellas MPOs. Continue to investigate methods for effectively participating in the regional citizens participation process conducted by the CCC. The CCC has not yet held hearings on items adopted by its Policy Board. The CCC should explore the need to hold regionally advertised hearings when adopting plans, policies and programs.

ACTION ITEM	ACTION TAKEN	REQUIRED ACTION
Adjacent counties and communities will be notified of projects within the Tampa Bay Area which impact their areas, and will be ensured participation in the planning process through discussions and input.	<p>Much of this action item continues to be accomplished through the MPO's regular participation in the CCC process.</p> <p>During the recent LRTP Update, Citrus County was included in FDOT's Regional Transportation Analysis process, including intercounty review.</p>	<p>Consider scheduling meetings with adjacent governments during the plan update process.</p> <p>Notify adjacent governments that are not part of the CCC or RTA process prior to taking actions that may affect their jurisdictions.</p>
Participate in activities defined in the CCC's enhanced Public Involvement Program, to be adopted by the end of 2003.	Assisted in development of the CCC's enhanced Public Involvement Program as required under the MPO reapportionment plans.	Review new responsibilities and tasks under the CCC's enhanced Public Involvement Program.
<i>Employment of Visualization Tehcniques and Availability of Electronic Documents via the Internet</i>		
Provide visual aids such as large maps, informational handouts, Power Point presentations, etc., at public workshops, public hearings, and other meetings as appropriate.	The MPO currently uses a variety of visual aids during presentation and workshops.	Research new available technologies for their applicability in conveying information during public meetings.
Ensure the prompt posting of documents for review on the MPO's web site.	Many documents are posted on the web site following adoption by the MPO.	<p>Review the means for posting documents that are currently up for review.</p> <p>Explore the means for allowing public feedback via the Internet.</p>
<i>MPO Consultation with State and Local Agencies</i>		
Consult with appropriate state and local agencies to coordinate the development of plans and programs with concerns such as; environmental protection, tribal government, wildlife management, land management, and historic preservation.	<p>Consultation is currently predominantly through the MPO's committee structure and its close relationship with the FDOT District 7 Office.</p> <p>Some direct and indirect communication and review is accomplished through existing lines of communication within the County Planning Department.</p>	<p>Develop additional lines of communication, both formal and informal, with appropriate state and local agencies.</p> <p>Pinpoint specific issues and timing for coordinating interagency review throughout Plan development</p>
Consultation shall involve: 1) a comparison of the MPO's LRTP with state conservation plans or maps, if available, or 2) comparison of the LRTP with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.	<p>Resources available through the Planning Department environmental staff is utilized during development of the LRTP.</p> <p>Mapping and databases provided through the state ETDM process is also utilized when assessing environmental and/or community impacts.</p>	<p>Expand available resources for conducting early impact assessments for environmental and cultural resources.</p> <p>Whenever possible, use the MPO's GIS and relational database capabilities to pinpoint area of concern from other agencies.</p>

Appendix A

LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Appendix A

HERNANDO COUNTY MPO LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Agency	Contact	Agency	Contact
African American Club	Sydney Martin P.O. Box 5203 Spring Hill, FL 34607 352.666.8718 smartin@innet.com	Brooksville Regional Hospital	17240 Cortez Blvd. Brooksville, FL 34601 352.796.5111
Hernando County Habitat for Humanity	7281 Sunshine Grove Road Brooksville, FL 34613 352.596.6600	Lighthouse for the Blind send agenda material	Marian Robinson 6492 California Street Spring Hill, FL 34609 352.754.1132 mrobinson@lighthouse-hernando.org
Children & Families	Sherry Leasure 1601 W. Gulf Atlantic Hwy. Wildwood, FL 34785 352.330.2162 sherry_k_leasure@dcf.state.fl.us	City of Brooksville	Jennene Norman-Vacha, City Manager 201 Howell Avenue Brooksville, FL 34601 352.544.5435
FL Dept of Education (Vocational Rehabilitation)	Bill Schweighofer 14437 7 th Street Dade City, FL 33534 Dade 352.521-1471 Brooksville 352.754-6733	Mid Florida Community Services	Michael Georgini 820 Kennedy Blvd. Brooksville, FL 34601 352.796.1425
Dept. of Elder Affairs	Tommy Ellis 2441 W. Silver Springs Blvd. Ocala, FL 34475 352.432.1349 SC 667-1349	Hernando-Pasco Hospice	Gene Whitfield 12260 Cortez Blvd Spring Hill, FL 34608 813.788.9900
Dawn Center of Hernando County, Admin Office	15009 Cortez Blvd Brooksville, FL 352.796.9747 352.596.9976	Health Department Adult Chronic Disease Program	300 S. Main Street Brooksville, FL 34601 352.540.6800
St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Store	1291 Kass Circle Spring Hill, FL 34606 352.688.3331	St. Frances Cabrini Parish	5030 Mariner Blvd. Spring Hill, FL 34609 352.688.0744
Daystar Life Center	7120 Hope Hill Road Brooksville, FL 34601 352.799.5930	Health & Human Services send agenda material	Jean Rags, Director 20 N. Main St., Room 161 Brooksville, FL 34601 352.540.4338

Veterans Services Division	16110 Aviation Loop Dr. Brooksville, FL 34609 352.754.4033	Salvation Army	15464 Cortez Blvd. Brooksville, FL 34601 352.796.8003
State of Florida, Dept of Veterans Affairs	above	Youth & Family Alternatives - RAP House Youth Shelter	4034 Commercial Way Spring Hill, FL 34606 352.686.2008
Catholic Charities Counseling Services	1423 Kass Circle Spring Hill, FL 34606 352.686.9897 352.683.5533	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	352.754.6660
Brooksville Housing Authority	800 Continental Drive Brooksville, FL 34601 352.796.6517 352.796.6547	Hernando County Housing Authority	Donald C. Singer, Director 2 N. Broad Street Brooksville, FL 34601 352.754.4160
Better Business Bureau of West Florida	1.800.525.1447	Pasco Hernando Jobs & Education Partnership Regional Board, Inc. Send agenda material	David Hamilton P.O. Box 15790 Brooksville, FL 34604 (352) 797-5781 david@pasco-hernando.com
Hernando County Commissioner	Interoffice Mail 20 N. Main Street, Room 460 Brooksville, FL 34601 352.754.4000	Career Central Hernando	7361 Forest Oaks Blvd. Spring Hill, FL 34606 352.666.5700