

# Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) List of Project Priorities (LOPP) Development Practices in Florida

## Draft Final Report

FDOT Contract number: BED25-977-12

Prepared for:



Florida Department of Transportation

Mark Reichert, Project Manager

Prepared by:



Center for Urban Transportation Research  
University of South Florida

Jeff Kramer, AICP, Principal Investigator

Taylor Dinehart, AICP, MPH

Tia Boyd, AICP

**August 2024**

2024



CUTR.USF.EDU



UNIVERSITY of  
SOUTH FLORIDA

# DISCLAIMER

The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Florida Department of Transportation.

## Technical Report Documentation Page

1. Report No.	2. Government Accession No.	3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle <b>Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) List of Project Priorities (LOPP) Development Practices in Florida</b>		5. Report Date <b>August 2024</b>	
		6. Performing Organization Code	
7. Author(s) <b>Jeff Kramer, Taylor Dinehart, and Tia Boyd</b>		8. Performing Organization Report No.	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address <b>Center for Urban Transportation Research University of South Florida 4202 E. Fowler Ave, CUT 100 Tampa, FL 33620</b>		10. Work Unit No. (TRAIS)	
		11. Contract or Grant No. <b>BED25-977-12</b>	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address <b>Florida Department of Transportation 605 Suwannee Street, MS 30 Tallahassee, FL 32399</b>		13. Type of Report and Period Covered <b>Draft Final; November 08, 2022 to November 30, 2024</b>	
		14. Sponsoring Agency Code	
15. Supplementary Notes			
16. Abstract <p>This report examines the approaches and collaborative efforts of Florida's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) districts in developing the List of Project Priorities (LOPP). Utilizing a literature review, surveys from all 27 MPOs and seven FDOT districts and case examples from four MPOs, the study seeks to improve LOPP practices. The survey findings reveal varied methodologies across MPOs in structuring LOPPs, with effective communication and coordination between MPOs, FDOT, and local governments identified as key factors for success. However, challenges such as funding constraints, political pressures, and procedural inefficiencies were also noted. Case studies highlighted the importance of tailored coordination strategies and flexible funding methods. The report synthesizes insights into nine overarching themes, emphasizing the significance of local context, strong interagency communication, and the quality of project applications in LOPP development. Recommendations include enhancing communication channels, strengthening interagency relationships, improving the quality of project applications, and aligning LOPP timelines with project development processes. These strategies aim to support effective transportation project prioritization and funding allocation across Florida's MPOs.</p>			
17. Key Word <b>metropolitan planning organizations, MPOs, List of Project Priorities, LOPP, project prioritization, planning, programming</b>		18. Distribution Statement <b>No restrictions.</b>	
19. Security Classif. (of this report) <b>Unclassified.</b>	20. Security Classif. (of this page) <b>Unclassified.</b>	21. No. of Pages <b>143</b>	22. Price

## Executive Summary

This report explores the current approaches and methodologies used by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in Florida to develop their List of Project Priorities (LOPPs) and examines the collaborative dynamics between MPOs and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) districts. The study used a literature review, survey responses from all 27 MPOs and seven FDOT districts, as well as in-depth case examples from four MPOs to explore current practices in LOPP development and use and to develop suggestions for improved practice.

### Literature review

The literature review encompassed diverse sources, including academic research articles, government regulations, state and federal guidance documents, and various reports. This review revealed an absence of standardized LOPP content or format guidelines for MPOs. Key themes include the necessity of integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, aligning criteria with long-term objectives, ensuring transparency, and limiting the number of criteria to maintain focus and effectiveness.

### Survey of Florida MPOs and FDOT Districts

The survey findings shed light on the varied approaches and practices employed by MPOs in Florida for developing their LOPPs and communicating project priorities. These practices encompass diverse organizational methods for structuring LOPP lists, such as program categories, mode-specific categorization, funding sources, regional priorities, geographic areas, and categories of importance. MPOs use evaluation methods like cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) and multicriteria decision analysis (MCDA) to prioritize projects based on factors such as congestion relief, safety enhancements, and community input. Key success factors identified in the survey for successfully advancing MPO project priorities include effective communication between MPOs and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), close coordination with local governments, proactive advocacy for projects, and maintaining stability and clarity in the LOPP process. Barriers to successful LOPP implementation include funding constraints, complex funding processes, competing priorities, political pressures, communication challenges, procedural inefficiencies, and lengthy project timelines. Clear and continuous communication between MPOs and FDOT was shown to be crucial for ensuring alignment on project priorities throughout the development and implementation phases of transportation projects.

### Case Example LOPP Development Practices

Case examples from four MPOs across different FDOT districts revealed unique strategies and collaborative efforts in LOPP development and project programming. Findings from these case examples emphasized the importance of tailored coordination strategies, strong interagency relationships, and flexible funding allocation methods. Challenges such as managing staff turnover and alignment with FDOT timelines were identified, suggesting areas for improved synchronization and efficiency.

## Overarching Themes

Insights from the literature review, survey results, and case examples were synthesized to reveal patterns, methodologies, and distinctions in transportation project prioritization by MPOs. These were presented as nine overarching themes discussed in detail in Chapter 6:

1. **Local context and collaborative processes:** MPOs and districts vary significantly in their approaches due to unique local characteristics, such as demographics and resource availability. Federal regulations provide a common framework, but each MPO adapts its collaborative processes to fit its specific context. Effective collaboration is shaped by these local nuances, emphasizing the importance of tailored methodologies.
2. **Importance of communication:** Successful LOPP development hinges on strong cross-agency relationships facilitated by open communication and mutual respect. Continuous dialogue between MPO and district staff is crucial for understanding and integrating priorities effectively, addressing concerns, and avoiding miscommunications.
3. **Multifunctional role of LOPP documents:** While primarily used for project prioritization and funding allocation, LOPPs also influence public discourse and decision making. They may include additional projects to appeal to broader audiences or secure discretionary funding, illustrating their role as a multifaceted tool in transportation planning.
4. **Organizational methods and flexibility:** MPOs use varying methods to organize their LOPPs, ranging from simple to complex lists. Each approach offers different benefits, such as clarity, flexibility, and control, depending on regional needs and stakeholder preferences.
5. **Funding allocation strategies:** MPOs and districts have diverse funding allocation strategies. Some use specific funds tied to project categories, while others rely on flexible, ad hoc methods. This variation affects how resources are directed towards priority projects.
6. **Project evaluation methods:** MPOs use various criteria for evaluating and prioritizing projects, including cost-effectiveness analysis, multicriteria decision analysis, and stakeholder input. These methods ensure that selected projects align with transportation goals and provide community benefits.
7. **Managing turnover:** Turnover among MPO and district staff is generally managed effectively through on-the-job training and knowledge transfer. While turnover is recognized as a potential challenge, it is often mitigated by proactive measures and continuity among senior staff.
8. **LOPP timelines and planning efficiency:** The timing of LOPP submissions varies, impacting planning efficiency. Some MPOs adopt earlier submission schedules to align with current needs, while others face challenges due to tight timelines and misaligned deadlines. Synchronizing these timelines is crucial for optimizing the planning process.
9. **Challenges with project applications:** MPOs face several challenges with project applications, including issues with application quality, funding constraints, and complex procedures. While the GAP (Grant Application Process) system aims to streamline the process by centralizing project information, it has introduced growing pains such as increased workload, confusion over submissions, and funding management.

## Suggestions for Improved Practice

Based on the overarching themes and the underlying information from which they were derived (information from the literature review, surveys, and case examples), several actionable strategies aimed at enhancing collaboration, streamlining processes, and improving project prioritization and funding allocation were developed. These suggestions are designed to guide local adaptations based on specific community needs rather than serve as universal solutions. Key suggestions discussed in detail in Chapter 7 include:

1. **Enhanced communication:** MPOs and districts should establish clear and regular communication channels. Effective dialogue helps both parties understand each other's priorities and goals, leading to more informed decision making and efficient resource allocation.
2. **Relationship building:** Building strong relationships between MPOs and districts is crucial for managing complex prioritization and funding allocation processes. Establishing trust and mutual understanding helps in navigating challenges and fosters effective collaboration.
3. **Defining terminology:** To improve transparency and avoid confusion, MPOs should consider including clear definitions for key terms in their LOPP documents. Standardized terminology across MPOs can also enhance understanding and communication.
4. **Regional priority lists:** MPOs could include regional project priorities in their LOPPs to improve coordination with neighboring MPOs and stakeholders. This approach enhances clarity and showcases collaborative efforts.
5. **Prioritization methodology:** Incorporating project prioritization criteria into the LOPP document can centralize information and make it easier for all parties to understand the criteria used for project selection and prioritization.
6. **Project application quality:** Enhancing the quality of project applications is important for creating effective LOPPs. Providing guidance and technical assistance to local governments can improve application completeness and readiness.
7. **GAP system efficiency:** Targeted training and increased local agency involvement in the GAP system can streamline project management and improve application quality.
8. **LOPP timelines:** Aligning LOPP submission deadlines with local project application timelines can improve efficiency and ensure that all relevant projects are considered in the current cycle.
9. **Project stability:** Developing processes to maintain project prioritization and address stalled projects can enhance transparency and ensure smooth project progression.
10. **Funding strategies:** Exploring innovative funding strategies, such as leveraging combined funds and partnerships, can help overcome financial challenges and support project advancement.
11. **Training and education:** Implementing training programs and formalizing knowledge transfer can improve understanding and efficiency among MPO and district staff, leading to better project applications and collaboration.
12. **LOPP ranking structure:** Simplifying LOPP prioritization lists can provide districts with maximum flexibility, making it easier to navigate and allocate resources. Smaller MPOs with fewer funding sources may benefit from streamlined lists, while larger MPOs might use structured funding programs for better fund management.

# Table of Contents

DISCLAIMER.....	II
TECHNICAL REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE.....	III
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	IV
TABLES .....	VIII
FIGURES .....	IX
ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS.....	XI
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY .....	3
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	5
CHAPTER 4: SURVEY OF FLORIDA MPOS AND FDOT DISTRICTS.....	12
CHAPTER 5: CASE EXAMPLE LOPP DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES.....	41
CHAPTER 6: OBSERVATIONS AND NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES.....	59
CHAPTER 7: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVED PRACTICE .....	77
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION .....	84
REFERENCES .....	85
APPENDIX A – SURVEY INSTRUMENT .....	88
APPENDIX B – SURVEY RESULTS .....	99
APPENDIX C – INTERVIEW SCRIPTS.....	126

## Tables

Table 1. Considerations for LOPP development from Florida State Statutes .....	6
Table 2. STIP and FDOT Work Program Comparison .....	7
Table 3. Results for MPO Survey Question 3: When you submit the LOPP to your FDOT District, does the document include... (check all that apply) .....	20
Table 4. Case Example MPO Quick Facts Comparison.....	42
Table 5. Broward MPO Program and Funding Allocations .....	67



# Figures

Figure 1. TIP Development Schedule.....	8
Figure 2. MPO Priority Process.....	9
Figure 3. Geographic distribution of LOPP survey responses .....	12
Figure 4. Results for MPO Survey Question 1 — “Many MPOs throughout the state have different priority lists housed within their LOPP. The following options are in at least one Florida MPO LOPP. Which of these lists are in your LOPP?” (Check all that apply).....	14
Figure 5. Number of lists per LOPP.....	15
Figure 6. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.d: “Are some projects represented on more than one list in the LOPP?” .....	15
Figure 7. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.e: “How would you describe how the different lists on your LOPP are organized?” (Check all that apply).....	16
Figure 8. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.b: “You selected that you have a list of regional priorities that you include in the LOPP which are jointly created with another MPO. What led your MPO to create this list and how is it developed?” .....	17
Figure 9. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.c: “Regarding regional project priorities, do you have any of the following listed in your LOPP?” (Check all that apply).....	18
Figure 10. Example (Bay County TPO) of varied types of tables depending on the priority list within an LOPP....	19
Figure 11. Results for MPO Survey Question 4: “Some MPOs maintain a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases through completion. Does your MPO provide this type of information in the LOPP?” .....	21
Figure 12. Results for MPO Survey Question 2: “Which method does your MPO use to evaluate projects for the LOPP?” (Check all that apply) .....	23
Figure 13. Results for MPO Survey Question 2.a: “How are your MPO’s project scoring criteria applied to projects for selection into the LOPP?”.....	24
Figure 14. Results for MPO Survey Question 2.b: “Which of these lists in your LOPP include projects selected using project scoring criteria?” (Check all that apply).....	25
Figure 15. Results for MPO Survey Question 2.c: “Is the methodology for project scoring criteria available to your FDOT district and other stakeholders?” (Check all that apply) .....	26
Figure 16. Response to MPO Survey Question 2: Is there any difference between how the priorities of TMA vs. non-TMA MPOs are considered in the development of the programming process?’ .....	28
Figure 17. Responses to MPO Survey Question 5: “When MPOs include regional priorities on their priority list (meaning a priority list that was jointly created with neighboring MPOs in which priorities are shared by the MPOs) how are the priorities on those lists handled by your district?” .....	29
Figure 18. Results for MPO Survey Question 5: “How does your MPO communicate with FDOT during the development of your LOPP?” (Check all that apply) and District Survey Question 3 “How does your district engage with MPOs during the development of their LOPPs?” .....	30
Figure 19. Number of methods used to communicate during the development of the LOPP .....	31
Figure 20. Results for MPO Survey Question 6: “Does your MPO engage with your district during development of the Tentative Work Program to ensure that the items in the LOPP are represented to the maximum extent possible?”.....	31
Figure 21. Response to District Survey Question 8: “Has the district ever reconsidered project funding based on communication with an MPO following completion of the Tentative Work Program?” .....	34
Figure 22. Results for MPO Survey Question 12: “In your opinion, is there enough FDOT involvement at the District Office and Central Office level in the development of your MPO’s LOPP?” .....	34

Figure 23. Summarized results for MPO Survey Question 8: “If your MPO has had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, do you believe this is because the LOPP effectively communicated priorities or for some other reason? Please explain.” (Text entry).....	35
Figure 24. Responses to MPO Survey Question 9: “If your MPO has not had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, what do you think is the reason for this?” .....	36
Figure 25. Response to District Survey Question 6: “Has there been confusion over MPO priorities in the past?” .....	37
Figure 26. Response to District Survey Question 7: “What characteristics or practices in the LOPP are most useful for FDOT to understand what is important to the MPO?” .....	38
Figure 27. Responses to District Survey Question 8 and related follow up questions: “Is there an LOPP you received or have seen in another district that is particularly clear and useful?” “Which MPO developed that LOPP?” and “What about this MPO’s LOPP did you find most valuable?” .....	39
Figure 28. Results for MPO Survey Question 11: “Has your MPO made changes to the LOPP development approach over the years (format, criteria, etc.)?” .....	40
Figure 29. Case Example MPOs .....	41
Figure 30. Excerpt from Lake-Sumter MPO’s 2023 LOPP Table 1—Top 20 Priorities (p. 10).....	44
Figure 31. Lake-Sumter MPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle .....	45
Figure 32. Excerpt of Broward MOP's 2023 LOPP - CSLIP (p. 12) .....	48
Figure 33. Broward MPO's 2023 LOPP—How to Read the Broward MPO Priority List (p. 4) .....	49
Figure 34. Broward MPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle.....	51
Figure 35. Excerpt from North Florida TPO's 2023 LOPP—Region-Wide Priority Projects (p. 7).....	53
Figure 36. North Florida TPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle .....	55
Figure 37. Excerpt from Pasco County MPO’s 2023 LOPP—Multimodal Transportation LOPP (p. 2) .....	56
Figure 38. Pasco County MPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle.....	58

## Abbreviations/Acronyms

BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CEA	Cost-Effectiveness Analysis
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIGP	County Incentive Grant Program
CMP	Congestion Management Process
CSLIP	Complete Streets and other Localized Incentives Program
CSMP	Complete Streets Master Plan
CTB	Commonwealth Transportation Board
CXS	CSX Transportation (a freight railroad company)
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
ETDM	Efficient Transportation Decision Making
FCEN	Florida Central Railroad
FDOT	Florida Department of Transportation
FEC	Florida East Coast railway corridor
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FM/FPID/FPN	FDOT Project Numbers
FTA	Florida Transportation Plan
GAP	Grant Application Process
LAP	Local Agency Program
LOPP	List of Project Priorities
L RTP	Long-Range Transportation Plan
MCA	Multicriteria Analysis
MCDA	Multicriteria Decision Analysis
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MPOAC	Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council
PD&E	Project Development and Environment Study
PIA	Project Information Application
PPACG	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
SCOP	Small County Outreach Program
SFRC	South Florida Rail Corridor
SII	Safety Improvement Index
SIS	Strategic Intermodal System
STBG	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
SU	Urban Attributable Funds from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee

TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TPO	Transportation Planning Organization
TRIP	Transportation Regional Incentive Program
TRIP	Transportation Regional Incentive Program
TSM&O	Transportation Systems Management and Operations
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VPSP2	Vermont Project Selection and Prioritization
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

# Chapter 1: Introduction

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is required by Florida Statute (s. 339.135(4), F.S.) to annually prepare a tentative work program, “including the ensuing fiscal year and the successive 4 fiscal years for the State Transportation Trust Fund and other funds managed by the department ... The tentative work program shall be based on the district work programs and shall set forth all projects by phase to be undertaken during the ensuing fiscal year and planned for the successive 4 fiscal years.” Per Florida Statute (s. 339.135(4)(c)(2), F.S.), “the district work program shall be developed cooperatively from the outset with the various metropolitan planning organizations of the state and include, to the maximum extent feasible, the project priorities of metropolitan planning organizations ...” To ensure that metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) develop project priorities every year and submit them to the FDOT in a timely fashion, Florida statute (s. 339.175(8)(b), F.S.) states that “each M.P.O. annually shall prepare a list of project priorities and shall submit the list to the appropriate district of the department by August 1 of each year.” The list of project priorities is also known as the LOPP.

Florida statutes provide MPOs<sup>1</sup> with a few high-level prevailing principles (s. 339.175(8)(a), F.S.) and selection criteria (s. 339.175(8)(b), F.S.) for developing the LOPP, and the MPO Program Management Handbook (Chapter 4, p. 4-15) provides a reminder that projects should be screened through the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process programming screen prior to being included in the LOPP. The MPO Program Management Handbook (Chapter 4, p. 4-16) states that, “The Department assumes that the projects listed in each LOPP are in sequential order of priority and will be programmed in priority order by the District’s Office of Work Program to the maximum extent possible.”

While the statute outlines the necessity for MPOs to create and submit an LOPP, it provides only basic guidelines for what should be included. This leaves each of the 27 MPOs in Florida with significant flexibility—and consequently variability—in how they develop their LOPPs. Differences can be seen in how the documents are formatted, the level of detail provided for each project, how projects are organized or categorized, and what types of funding are considered. This variability introduces certain challenges. For instance, the lack of standardization can lead to confusion and inefficiencies for FDOT district personnel who review these documents, complicating the cooperative effort between MPOs and FDOT to develop a cohesive and efficient tentative work program. However, this diversity also presents a unique opportunity: by examining the wide range of LOPPs produced by different MPOs, we can identify and compare noteworthy practices.

---

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, all federally designated metropolitan planning organizations will be referred to as 'MPOs.' This includes organizations operating under various designations such as TPOs, TPAs, MTPOs, and unique identifiers like MetroPlan Orlando and Forward Pinellas.

This project seeks to identify the various practices and methodologies used by Florida's 27 MPOs to develop their LOPPs and what characteristics of those LOPPs are notable for clearly communicating MPO priorities to FDOT District Offices. The research objectives include:

- Documenting current federal and state requirements for MPO LOPP development through a review of relevant regulatory and guidance documents.
- Documenting the current national state of the practice for project prioritization by MPOs, including practices that ensure the clear and effective communication of project priorities and specifically focusing on practices pertaining to the development of a List of Project Priorities.
- Documenting Florida MPO project prioritization methodologies, agency coordination (including at the regional level), public engagement practices, LOPP format and structure approaches, and efforts taken to ensure effective and clear communication of project priorities with FDOT districts.
- Documenting noteworthy practices for LOPP development within Florida, including clear and effective strategies for communicating priorities with FDOT districts.
- Developing clear suggestions for improved statewide practices related to LOPP development, including methods to communicate project priorities clearly and effectively with FDOT districts.

## Chapter 2 Methodology

The research methodology for this project involved several comprehensive steps designed to identify and document the practices and methodologies used by Florida’s 27 MPOs to develop their Lists of Project Priorities (LOPPs).

### Literature Review

The initial step was a detailed literature review focusing on project prioritization methodologies employed by MPOs. This review encompassed a wide range of sources including academic research articles, government regulations, state and federal guidance documents, and various reports and papers. The primary focus areas were noteworthy practices and emerging trends in project prioritization, particularly those related to safety, cost-effectiveness, and performance outcomes. Additionally, the review examined federal and state requirements for MPO LOPP development, national practices for project prioritization by MPOs, and specific methodologies, coordination efforts, and public engagement practices employed by Florida MPOs.

### Survey Development

Based on insights from the literature review, surveys were developed to gather data on current practices and methodologies used by Florida MPOs for LOPP development and coordination with FDOT Districts in the broader project programming process. The target respondents included representatives from the 27 Florida MPOs and the seven FDOT Districts. The survey questions, created with input from FDOT personnel, covered various aspects of LOPP development including prioritization methodologies, coordination efforts, public engagement practices, LOPP format and structure, and communication of project priorities. The surveys were designed with multiple-choice and open-ended questions, incorporating survey logic to display additional questions based on initial responses.

### Survey Distribution and Collection

The surveys were distributed electronically via Qualtrics beginning on July 17, 2023, and responses were collected until August 30, 2023. The survey achieved a 100% response rate, with all 27 MPOs and all seven FDOT districts participating. Ten responses were collected from the seven FDOT districts, with some districts having multiple respondents. The surveys asked respondents questions on the following topics:

#### MPO Survey Topics:

- Prioritization methodologies
- Coordination with member jurisdictions and neighboring MPOs
- Public engagement practices
- LOPP format and structure approaches
- Communication of project priorities
- Barriers to identifying and communicating top priorities

### FDOT District Survey Topics:

- Strong practices in methodologies, coordination, public engagement, format, and structure
- Clarity and confusion over priorities
- Engagement with MPOs during the Tentative Work Program development process
- Resolution of LOPP misunderstandings and complaints

The survey responses were analyzed and anonymized to present unfiltered reactions while maintaining respondent anonymity. Identifying information included in the survey responses were converted to more generic terms to protect the identity of respondents.

### Case Example Selection and Analysis

Four MPOs were selected for detailed examination based on notable elements identified in the literature review and survey responses regarding LOPP development practices. The selected MPOs were Broward MPO, Lake-Sumter MPO, North Florida TPO, and Pasco County MPO (Figure 29). The selection criteria ensured representation of varied metropolitan planning areas by population and geography.

Case example analysis involved reviewing current LOPP documents and other relevant materials from the selected MPOs. Virtual interviews were then conducted with MPO and FDOT district staff to gain a deeper understanding of LOPP development practices. Structured interview scripts guided these interviews, with follow-up questions asked as needed to gather more detailed information. The interviews sought to understand noteworthy practices, challenges both in the LOPP development and the broader project programming processes, and potential areas for improvement.

### Documentation

Detailed findings from the literature review (Chapter 3), survey (Chapter 4), and case example analysis (Chapter 5) are housed within this report. The survey instruments and responses, as well as the interview scripts, are included in the appendices of this report to provide comprehensive documentation of the research process.



## Chapter 3: Literature Review

This section provides a condensed version of the comprehensive literature review conducted for this research. For a detailed examination of the relevant literature, please refer to the full literature review available at [https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cutr\\_tpppfr/47/](https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cutr_tpppfr/47/).

The literature review serves as a thorough analysis of project prioritization in transportation planning, specifically focusing on the methodologies and approaches used by MPOs in developing their LOPPs. The review encompasses a wide range of sources, including academic research articles, government regulations, relevant state and federal guidance documents, and any reports or papers focusing on prioritization mechanisms for MPOs or methods for effective communication of project priorities. It aims to provide insight into noteworthy practices and emerging trends in project prioritization, with a focus on safety, cost-effectiveness, and performance outcomes. Additionally, the review examines federal and state requirements for MPO LOPP development, national practices for project prioritization by MPOs, and specific methodologies, coordination efforts, and public engagement practices employed by Florida MPOs.

The purpose of the LOPP in Florida is to serve as a bridge between an MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the annual programming of projects by FDOT and each individual MPO. Projects included as part of an MPO LOPP are considered for programming by the FDOT during the development of the Tentative Five-Year Work Program which is used by Florida's MPOs for the development of their Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). Ultimately, the projects included in the FDOT Five-Year Work Program and individual MPO TIPs are reflected in the Florida Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) which is used by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to determine eligibility for federal funding. For this reason, this literature review covers linkages between MPO LRTPs, MPO TIPs, the long-range statewide transportation plan (referred to in Florida as the Florida Transportation Plan or FTP), the STIP, and the FDOT Five-Year Work Program.

The findings of this literature review were used to build the survey questions in Chapter 4 and help in choosing the case example MPOs in Chapter 5.

### Federal Planning and Programming Requirements

Federal laws and regulations do not include requirements for an LOPP. They require MPOs to develop a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP, in Florida referred to as a Long-Range Transportation Plan or LRTP) and a TIP in cooperation with their state Department of Transportation (DOT) and public transportation operators. Similarly, each state, typically through its DOT, must create a long-range statewide transportation plan and a STIP in collaboration with the MPOs within the state. There is no federal requirement for state DOTs to produce a Work Program, this requirement comes from Florida Statute.

Federal law establishes that both an MPO and state DOT must cooperate to make their plans and develop a program (TIP and STIP respectively) to implement projects, but does not stipulate how to do

this and does not describe how projects from the plans are to be included in the respective programs. Further, identification in federal law as to which agency is the lead programming agency for this action is somewhat complicated and often depends on factors such as funding source and urbanized area population. For example, a share of federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program funds are allocated to urbanized areas with a population above 200,000. Depending on the State, either the MPO, the State, or a combination of both MPO and State will determine which projects to commit those funds to in the STIP and the TIP (23 U.S. Code § 133(e) and (h)).

Similar to the U.S. Code, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) makes it clear that the TIP should include a list of projects cooperatively agreed upon by the MPO, the State, and/or public transportation operator(s). Additionally, the CFR stipulates that the TIP should identify criteria and a process for prioritizing projects. Again, the specifics of how this should be done and who the lead agency is in this matter are left out of the text, and there is no mention of a requirement to create an additional document such as the LOPP.

## State Planning and Programming Requirements

Florida statutes are more detailed than federal laws and regulations on the subject of project priorities used for the TIP. Florida Statute (s. 339.175, F.S.) denotes the need for an additional “list of project priorities” document that must be created and used by the MPO to develop their TIP and the appropriate FDOT district to develop their District Work Program.

While State statute clearly establishes a requirement for an LOPP, it does not include specific guidance on its content or format. It is up to each individual MPO to determine how to compile the LOPP and what form it will take. Additionally, State statute highlights three prevailing principles and five project selection criteria to consider during the development of the LOPP (Table 1).

**Table 1. Considerations for LOPP development from Florida State Statutes**

Prevailing Principles	Project Selection Criteria
Preserving existing transportation infrastructure	The approved MPO long-range transportation plan
Enhancing Florida’s economic competitiveness	The Strategic Intermodal System Plan [s. 339.64]
Improving travel choices to ensure safety and mobility	The priorities developed pursuant to the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) [s. 339.2819(4)]
	The results of the transportation management systems
	The MPO’s public-involvement procedures

State statute also introduces an additional required document that is not present in federal law—the 5-Year Work Program. The 5-Year Work Program is a separate but similar document to the federally required STIP. Florida Statute (s. 339.135, F.S.) describes three types of Work Programs: a District Work Program, a Tentative Work Program, and an Adopted Work Program.

The District Work Program is a collaborative 5-year plan of transportation projects prepared by FDOT districts in cooperation with MPOs, integrating MPO project priorities as much as possible. It informs MPOs about anticipated changes in state and federal funding allocations. The Tentative Work Program, derived from District Work Programs, is a statewide 5-year project listing aligned with the FTP. Evaluated by the Florida Transportation Commission (FTC), it undergoes legislative review before final adoption by the Secretary of Transportation as the Adopted Work Program on July 1 each year, with potential amendments outlined in Sect. 339.135(7).

The Adopted Work Program is similar to the STIP but differs in a few aspects. Table 2 outlines key differences between the STIP and the Adopted FDOT Work Program.

**Table 2. STIP and FDOT Work Program Comparison**

STIP	Work Program
Required by <b>federal</b> law	Required by <b>state</b> law
A statewide prioritized listing of transportation projects which covers a period of no less than <b>four</b> years	A statewide prioritized listing of transportation projects which covers a period of <b>five</b> years
A compilation of all <b>MPO TIPs</b> plus funding in non-metropolitan areas and any statewide line items and programs	A compilation of all <b>District and Turnpike Enterprise Work Programs</b>
Contains all highway and transit projects programmed using <b>federal funding</b>	Contains all highway and transit projects programmed using <b>federal and state funding</b>

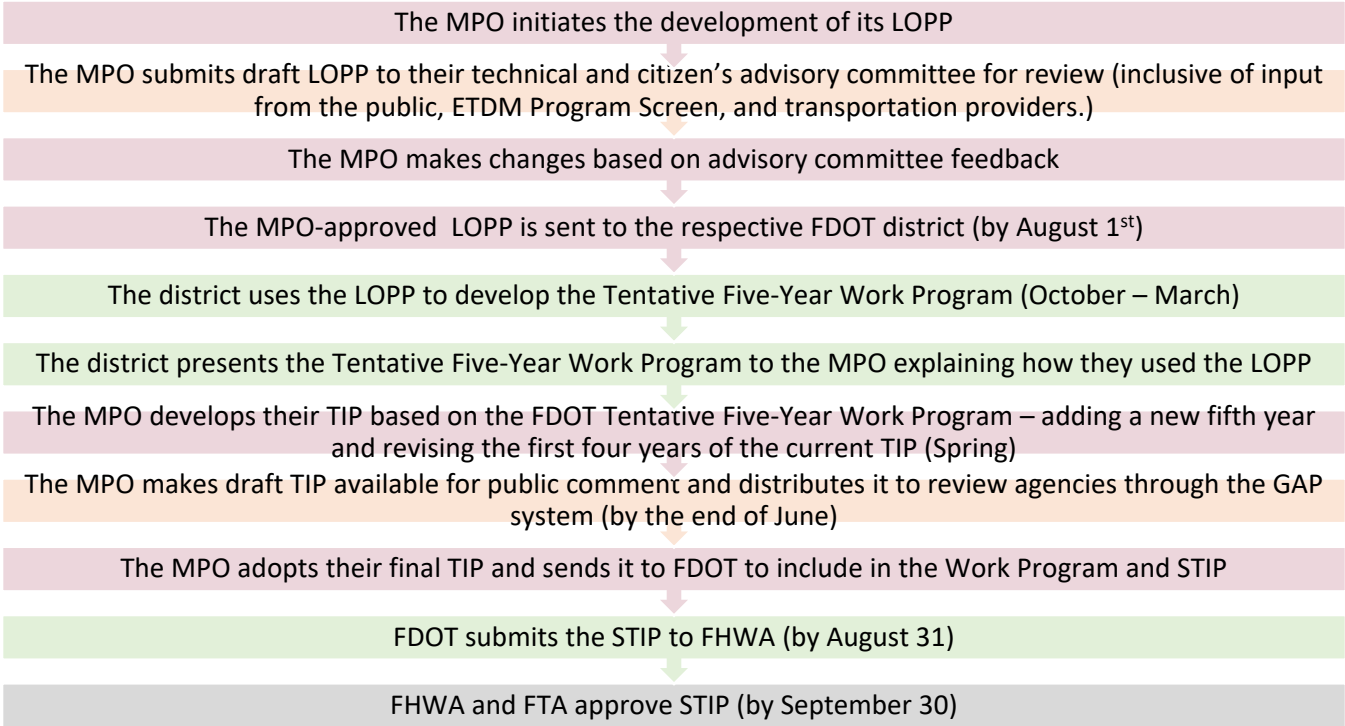
**Guidance Documents Related to Planning and Programming**

In an effort to clarify information found in state and federal statutes and regulations regarding planning and programming procedures for transportation agencies, FDOT has produced a number of documents that interpret pertinent regulations. While these documents are not themselves legally binding, they do help explain the agency’s programs and policies and are useful tools MPOs may use in the implementation of federal and state regulation. Guidance documents produced by FDOT that provide additional information regarding the development of the STIP, Work Program, and/or LOPP are the Work Program Instructions and the MPO Program Management Handbook.

The FDOT’s Work Program Instructions sheds some light on the relationship between the statewide Work Program and the STIP. Since the Work Program requirements are more expansive (both in years covered and overall content) than the requirements for the STIP, the Florida FHWA Division Office granted FDOT approval to submit the first four years of the Work Program as the STIP (FDOT, 2022a). Therefore, for a project to be listed in the approved STIP, it must first be included in the first four years of the Adopted 5-Year Work Program. Projects must either be programmed into the Tentative Work Program during the annual Tentative Work Program development cycle or amended into the Adopted Work Program after July 1st of each year.

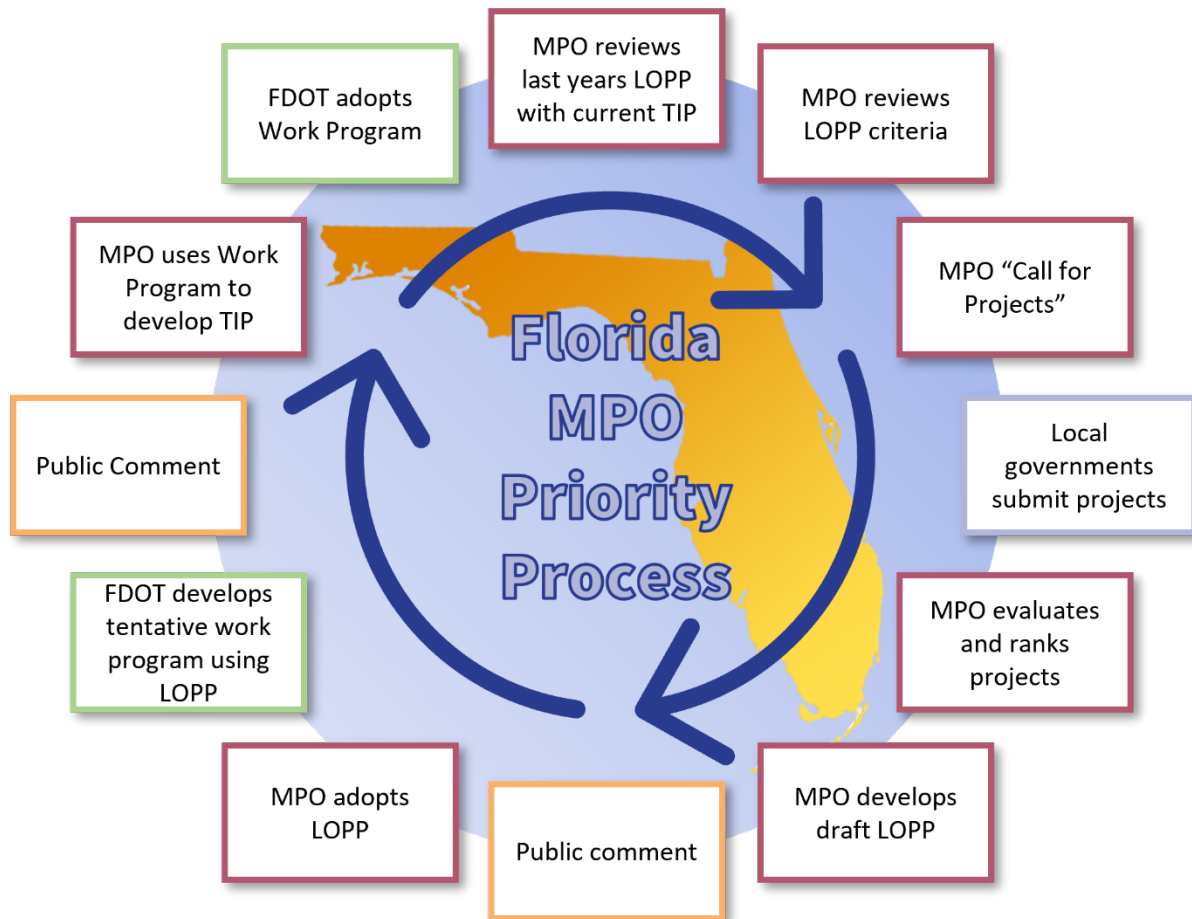
While the Work Program Instructions discuss the Work Program and the STIP, both of which rely on the development of MPO LOPPs, the document does not provide detailed instructions for how to develop an LOPP. The FDOT’s MPO Program Management Handbook, on the other hand, does contain a section dedicated to the LOPP. First, the Handbook reiterates project selection criteria and other requirements laid out in Florida statute regarding the LOPP. The Handbook then mentions the inclusion of an Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) screening process as part of the LOPP development process.

According to the MPO Program Management Handbook, it is not only the responsibility of the MPO to ensure that projects are screened prior to inclusion in the LOPP. The respective FDOT district is also charged with making sure ETDM screening has taken place. The Handbook also states that FDOT assumes that the projects listed in an MPO’s LOPP are in sequential order of priority, and that they will be programmed in priority order by each District’s Office of Work Program to the maximum extent possible (FDOT, 2022b, chapter 4 updated 2024, p. 4-16). Through describing the TIP development cycle and the MPO priority process, the MPO Program Management Handbook outlines the general timeline and cycle of the LOPP (Figure 1 and Figure 2).



**Figure 1. TIP Development Schedule**

Source: Adapted from FDOT MPO Program Management Handbook, 2022b (chapter 4 updated 2024).



**Figure 2. MPO Priority Process**

Source: Adapted from FDOT MPO Program Management Handbook, 2022 (chapter 4 updated 2024).

## Reports or Papers Related to Project Prioritization Mechanisms

Due to the absence of federal guidance on how to link planning and programming of transportation projects, each state has developed its own requirements, and within each state, MPOs have each developed their own processes. Most studies identified in this literature review evaluate prioritization processes at the individual local, regional, or state level and provide recommendations of frameworks for public transportation agencies to evaluate and prioritize investments. Additionally, a handful of studies present statewide approaches for standardizing both the prioritization process and the communication of that process between regional entities and state DOTs; however, there are no studies to date that focus on project prioritization in Florida. Largely, studies on transportation project prioritization are concerned with evaluating: (1) methods for prioritization (e.g., process-based, goals-based, cost-benefit analysis-based, cost-effectiveness analysis-based, multicriteria analysis-based), (2) prioritization processes featuring specific criteria (e.g., safety, equity, resiliency, public health), (3) prioritization of certain types of projects (e.g., freight, highway, multimodal), or (4) processes used by certain levels of decision making (e.g., state, regional). At least four studies covered in the literature review focused on evaluating or developing a regional or statewide framework for prioritization.

## Prioritization Processes Featuring Specific Criteria

Several reports focused on the importance or effectiveness of including certain criteria within a project prioritization process such as safety (Herbel et al., 2009), public health (Deliali et al., 2022), resiliency (Esmalian et al., 2022), and equity considerations (Joshi & Lambert, 2007; Krapp et al., 2021; Williams et al., 2021). Regarding the selection of criteria, many researchers observed that project screening and selection criteria should be tied to the agency's long-term priorities (Broniewicz & Ogrodnik, 2020; Beria et al., 2011; Deliali et al., 2022; Gunasekera et al., 2014; Guo et al., 2020; Meyer, 2016; Smart Growth America, 2019; Sperling & Ross, 2018). Another common observation within the literature was that criteria should address the agency's priorities *across all modes* (Gunasekera et al., 2014; Hardy et al., 2019; McCoy et al., 2016; Meyer, 2016; Rezvania et al., 2015).

Meyer (2016) noted that criteria used in evaluating projects should relate directly to system performance measures and that they should focus on impacts to the traveler rather than on impacts to infrastructure. Also, stakeholders should participate in and agree with the selection of objectives and goals and the weight that those objectives and goals carry in project selection, and the entire process should be transparent and understandable to stakeholders (Beria et al., 2011; Meyer, 2016; Smart Growth America, 2019.)

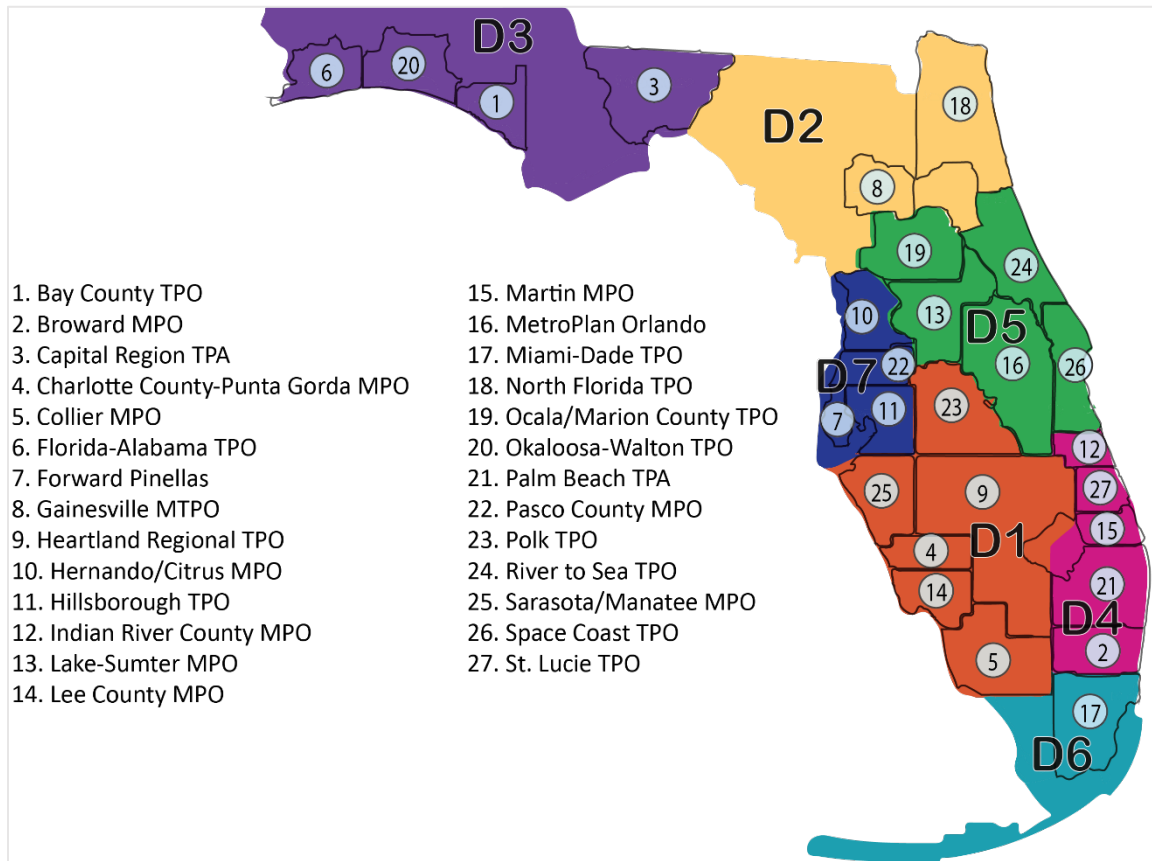
Additionally, the literature speaks to the importance for evaluation processes to be comprehensible and relevant to decision makers. Evaluation, which involves synthesizing information about the benefits, costs, and impacts of various alternatives, must be directly aligned with the decisions facing decision makers. Meyer (2016) highlights several key characteristics of effective evaluation, including the need to focus on decision making, relate consequences to goals and objectives, and communicate information in a timely and easily understandable form.

Key themes which emerged from this review are as follows:

- There is no one-size fits all method for prioritization—although combining approaches which take into account both quantitative and qualitative considerations helps to limit the weakness of each method while maintaining many of the benefits of each.
- Project screening and selection criteria should be tied to the agency's long-term priorities—those found in the LRTP vision, objective, and goals for instance.
- Goals and objectives used in the creation of criteria should represent a desired end state—not a means to those ends.
- Criteria should address the agency's long-term priorities across all modes.
- Criteria used in evaluating projects should relate directly to system performance measures.
- Criteria should focus on impacts to the traveler rather than on impacts to infrastructure.
- Stakeholders should participate in and agree with the selection of objectives and goals and the weight that those goals carry in project selection.
- The evaluation process and criteria should be transparent and easy to understand, particularly to decision makers.
  - Transparency and clarity of selection criteria provide the potential for less disagreement over outcomes of an evaluation process.

- The public and other stakeholders will be able to understand and participate in the process.
- If stakeholders who are submitting projects for evaluation know the criteria ahead of time, they can save time and energy by focusing on projects that are more likely to be selected or they can include elements to their projects that speak to those criteria.
- The number of goals/criteria to use in scoring projects should be reasonably limited—"if everything matters, nothing does." This also helps to decrease the likelihood of double counting.
- Criteria should be feasible in terms of the time, resources, and availability of data necessary to accurately measure and assess them.
- The process chosen should be able to address the complexities of the decision being made (i.e., the size and complexity of the project, project stage, quantifiability of costs and benefits, and time and resources to complete the chosen evaluation.)

## Chapter 4: Survey of Florida MPOs and FDOT Districts



**Figure 3. Geographic distribution of LOPP survey responses**

This chapter documents the results of a survey on current practices and methodologies used by Florida MPOs to develop their LOPPs. A copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix A and a more detailed version of survey responses are provided in Appendix B. Two surveys were distributed—one version was sent to representatives of the 27 Florida MPOs and another was sent to appropriate representatives from Florida’s 7 FDOT districts (Figure 3).

MPO representatives were asked about various aspects of LOPP development practices including prioritization methodologies, coordination with MPO member jurisdictions and neighboring MPOs (including efforts to develop regional project priorities), public engagement practices, LOPP format and structure approaches, efforts taken to ensure effective and clear communication of their project priorities, and if there are any barriers or obstacles to identifying their top priorities and clearly communicating those priorities to FDOT districts. MPOs were also asked about their interaction with FDOT during and after the development of the Tentative Work Program, including whether prioritized projects were programmed as part of that process.

Likewise, FDOT district representatives were asked about various aspects from the LOPP end-user perspective, including observations of strong practices related to methodologies, coordination, public



engagement, format, and structure. District representatives were asked whether there has been confusion over priorities in the past, what characteristics make a priority list clear or confusing, how the FDOT district engaged MPOs during the development of the Tentative Work Program to resolve issues of clarity, and how the district addressed MPO complaints related to LOPP misunderstandings after the Tentative Work Program was completed.

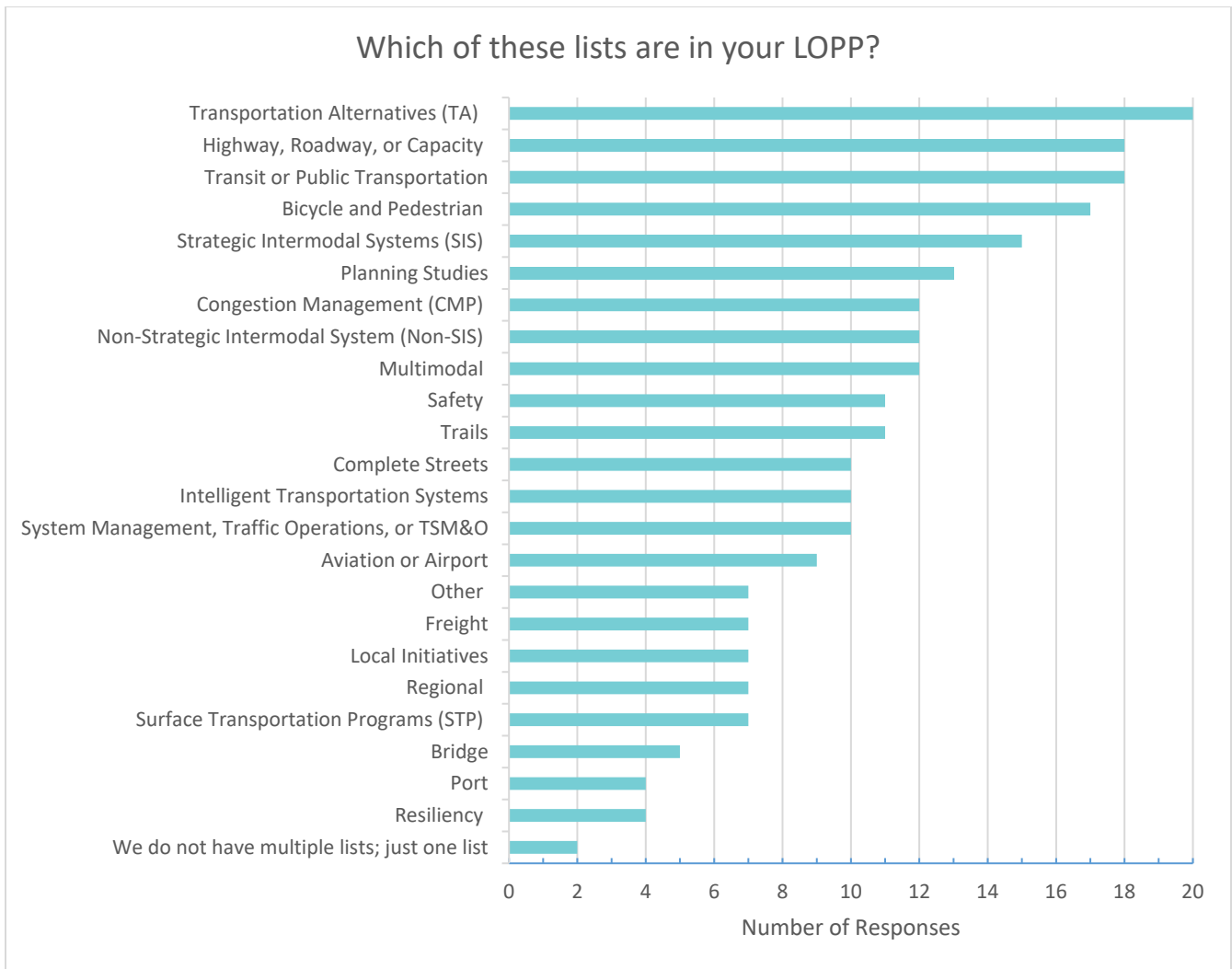
Surveys were distributed electronically through the survey platform Qualtrics beginning on July 17, 2023, and were collected from July 17, 2023, to August 30, 2023. Responses to the survey were completed and submitted by representatives from all 27 MPOs and all 7 districts for a 100% response rate. Ten responses were collected for the 7 FDOT districts with two representatives from District 2, District 3, and District 7 and one respondent for all other districts. All ten perspectives are represented in the research findings.

The survey version sent to MPO representatives consisted of 12 questions and the version sent to FDOT district representatives contained 13 questions. The questions in each version were presented as multiple-choice options with either radio buttons (one choice could be selected) or checkboxes (one or more choices could be selected), or as open-ended options using textboxes. Several of the questions included multiple parts using survey logic that displayed additional questions based on the response provided. The questions, as well as options for multiple choice questions, were compiled through a scan of previous LOPPs, findings from the literature review, and input from FDOT personnel.

Survey responses in this report have been anonymized where appropriate to allow for the presentation of unfiltered reactions to the questions from the respondents. Therefore, some identifying text has been modified for the sake of anonymity in quoted text responses. Examples of this include converting “TPO” to “MPO,” changing “Name of MPO” to “our MPO,” changing “District ##” to “our district,” and changing proper city and county names to more generic terms.

## Composition of LOPPs

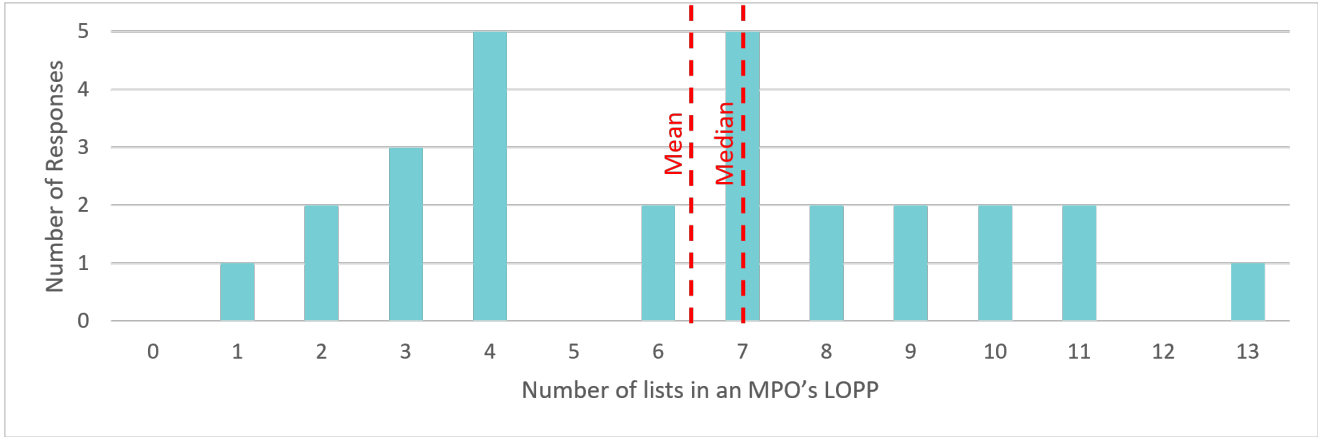
The survey highlighted that nearly all MPOs (25 out of 27) include more than one list within their LOPPs, indicating a complex and multifaceted approach to prioritizing projects. Only two MPOs reported using a single consolidated list. Among those with multiple lists, the most prevalent categories were Transportation Alternative projects (n=20), Highway, Roadway, or Capacity projects (n=18), Transit or Public Transportation projects (n=18), Bicycle and Pedestrian projects (n=17), and Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) projects (n=15). A full list of categories found within the MPOs’ LOPPs according to the survey respondents is shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Results for MPO Survey Question 1 — “Many MPOs throughout the state have different priority lists housed within their LOPP. The following options are in at least one Florida MPO LOPP. Which of these lists are in your LOPP?” (Check all that apply)**

Among the seven respondents who selected the 'other' option, their explanations indicated a desire to provide greater specificity about their lists. While the multiple-choice options provided a broad framework, some MPOs had specific lists that required further detail. For instance, one respondent mentioned the 'Small County Outreach Program' (SCOP) and 'Small County Resurfacing Assistance Program' (SCRAP) as lists in their LOPPs. Another respondent noted that their LOPP contained a 'Master List' made up of the highest priority projects from the other lists in their LOPP.

The number of lists reported by respondents ranged from a single list to 21 separate lists. The average number of lists in an LOPP was just over 6 (Figure 5).

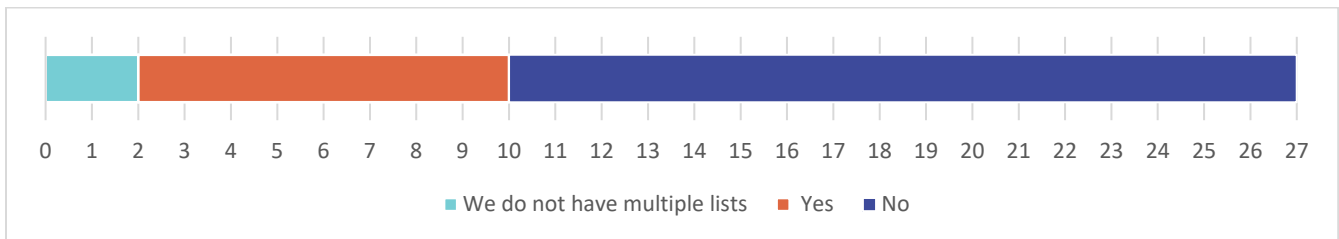


**Figure 5. Number of lists per LOPP**

MPO representatives that selected “Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities” lists were asked to define what these terms mean in the context of their LOPP. Responses varied, with some focusing on new roads or road widenings, typically involving state highways or major corridor improvements. Others referred to these as “Regionally Significant” projects, encompassing major capacity enhancements, complete streets, and intersection improvements. For some, this category denotes non-SIS projects on state roadways that are earmarked for state-controlled funding such as District Dedicated Revenue (although other funding sources such as federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program funding are sometimes used for these projects as well).

**Overlapping Priorities and Organizational Methods**

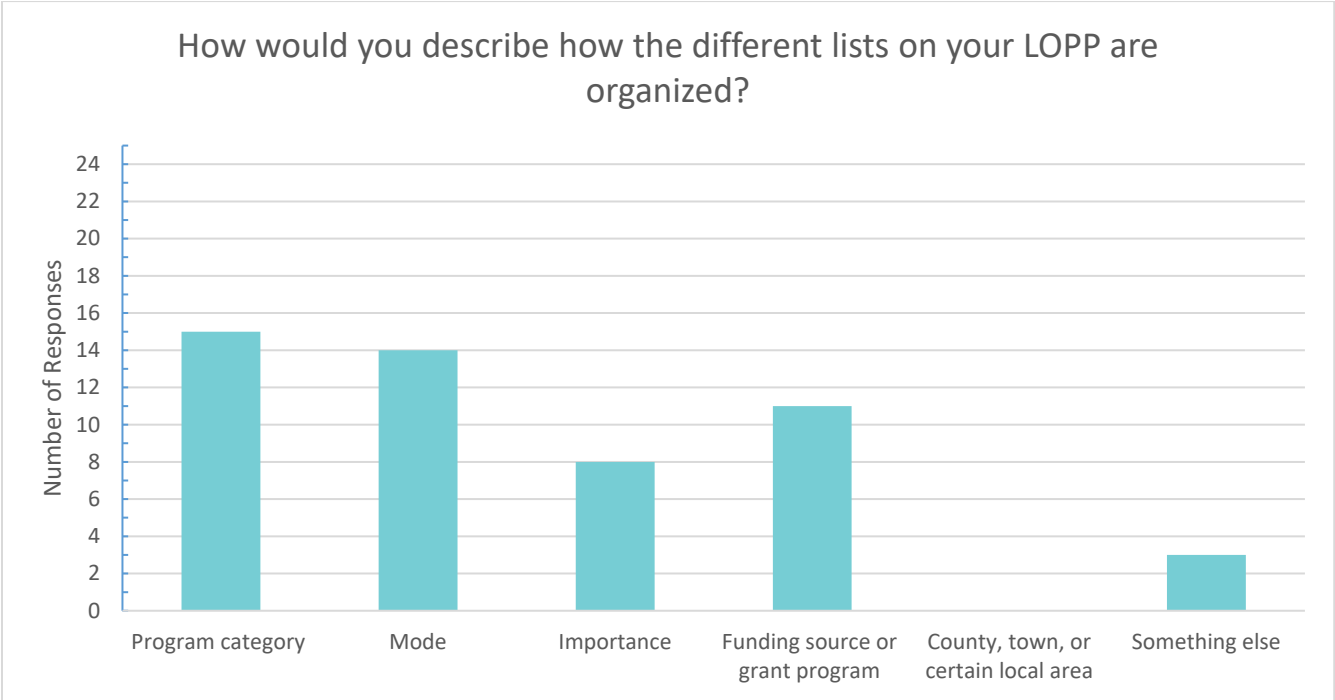
Respondents that indicated that they had more than one list in their LOPP were asked whether some projects were presented on more than one list in their LOPP. Eight MPOs indicated that some projects were represented on more than one list in their LOPP (Figure 6).



**Figure 6. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.d: “Are some projects represented on more than one list in the LOPP?”**

When it comes to organizing these lists, MPOs employ various methods sometimes in combination; 12 respondents indicated using two or more methods to organize their lists. The majority (15 MPOs) organize their lists by program categories based on Long-Range Transportation Plans (L RTPs) or other strategic plans, such as Complete Streets, Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O), or Congestion Management Process (CMP). This method was often chosen in combination with other methods, particularly with mode (n=7) and funding source (n=5) categorizations.

Fourteen MPOs organize their projects by mode, such as Transit, Bike/Pedestrian, or Highway, making it the second most popular method. Mode was frequently chosen in combination with funding source (n=8), program categories (n=7), or both (n=5). Eleven MPOs sort their projects by funding source or grant program, a method often paired with either mode (n=8), program (n=7), or both mode and program. Eight indicated that they organized their lists by categories of importance (e.g., Tier 1, Tier 2, etc.). Interestingly, no MPOs organized their lists by geographic areas such as county or municipality, highlighting a focus on broader programmatic and modal categories (Figure 7).

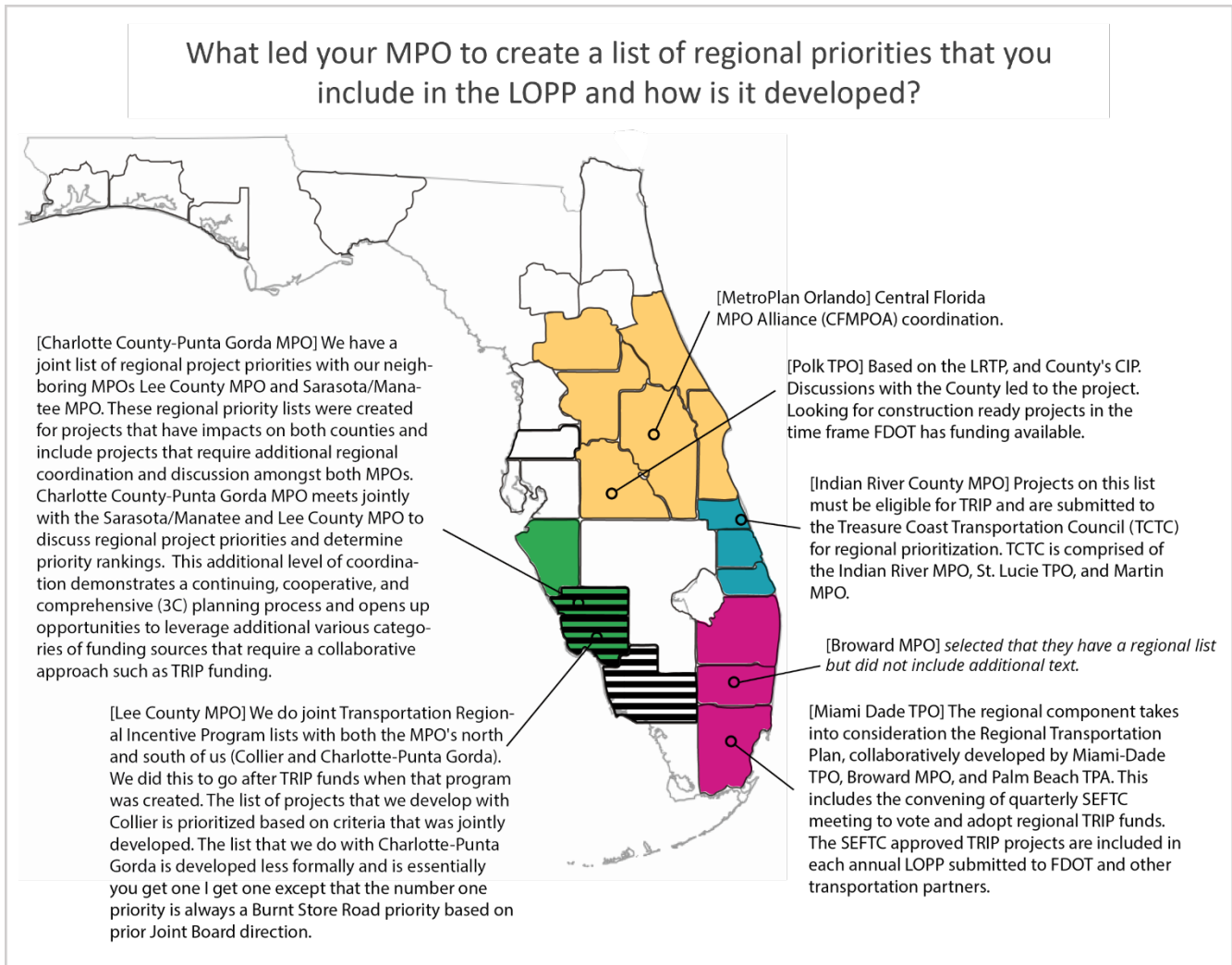


**Figure 7. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.e: “How would you describe how the different lists on your LOPP are organized?” (Check all that apply)**

Two of the three MPO representatives who selected "something else" also selected one of the other options shown in Figure 7, but wanted to include further detail. For instance, one organizes their lists by mode and type of improvement, and also includes an overall Top 20 list. Another respondent that chose ‘something else’ wrote “FTP SIS; Transit; and Transportation System (federal and state funds not allocated to the SIS and transit block grants).”

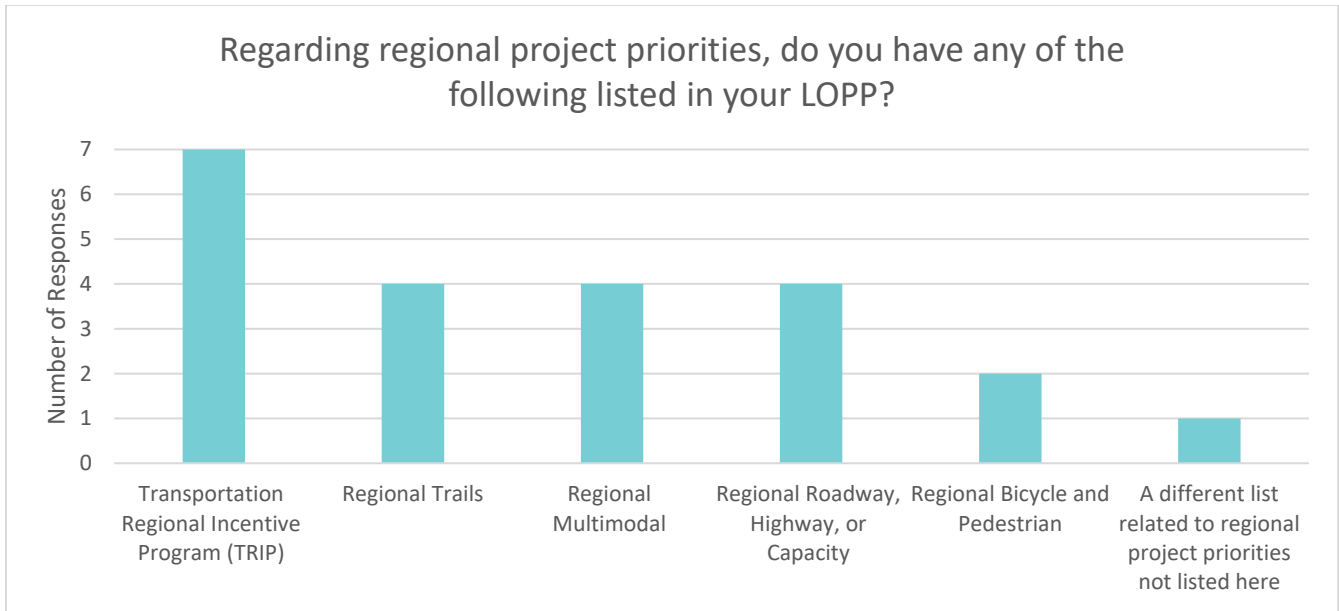
**Regional Collaborations**

Regional cooperation emerged as a significant theme, with seven MPOs reporting the inclusion of regional project priorities developed jointly with neighboring MPOs. Notable collaborations included those involving Broward MPO, Charlotte Country-Punta Gorda MPO, Indian River County MPO, Lee County MPO, MetroPlan Orlando, Miami-Dade TPO, and Polk TPO. Of those seven, six explained what led their MPO to create a regional list. Their explanations are outlined in Figure 8. A total of 16 MPOs were identified as participating in joint regional project priority list development.



**Figure 8. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.b: “You selected that you have a list of regional priorities that you include in the LOPP which are jointly created with another MPO. What led your MPO to create this list and how is it developed?”**

Additionally, the seven respondents that indicated they had a regional project priority list(s) in their LOPP were asked to identify the nature of those list(s). All seven of the respondents indicated that they had a Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) list in their LOPP. Four indicated they had an additional list in their LOPP for specific regional projects such as regional trails, regional multimodal, and regional capacity projects. Two respondents indicated that they had a list for regional bicycle and pedestrian plan projects, and one respondent checked that they considered all of their state/federal funded projects to be “regional” given their multi-county study area (Figure 9).



**Figure 9. Results for MPO Survey Question 1.c: “Regarding regional project priorities, do you have any of the following listed in your LOPP?” (Check all that apply)**

#### Elements Included in the LOPP Document

All 27 Florida MPO representatives detailed the components included in their LOPP document. Every respondent indicated that their LOPP documents feature a ranked list of projects. Additionally, 19 said their lists show priority by the relative position on the list, and 17 provide detailed tables with project information like sponsor, location, and costs. Some MPOs also include projects from past LOPPs that are now fully funded (n=15) and varied types of tables depending on the priority list (n=10). Figure 10 shows an example of varied types of tables depending on the priority list within an LOPP from the Bay County TPO.

Non-Strategic Intermodal System (Non-SIS) Project Priorities											
Priority Rank	Project Name/Limits	FDOT WPI#	Programmed Funding					Project/Strategy	Length (miles)	Funding Sought	
1	ITS	4084123	Phase	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Operations and Maintenance of the current ITS System	NA	\$700,000 (Annual Setaside Funds)
			OPS	\$500,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000			

Strategic Intermodal System (Non-SIS) Project Priorities												
Priority Rank	Project Name/Limits	FDOT WPI#	Programmed Funding					Project/Strategy	County	Length (miles)	Funding Sought	
1	SR 75 (US 231)	2179107	Phase	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Widen to 6 Lanes <sup>1</sup>	BAY	4.27	CST
	US 98 (15th St.) to SR 368 (23rd St.)		ROW	\$9,037,720	\$19,000,000	\$21,000,000	\$200,000	\$28,612,280				

Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Project Priorities						
Recommended Rank	Previous Rank	Major Street	Minor Street	Proposed Improvements	Study Date	Cost Estimate
1	1	Operations and Maintenance of the current ITS System. (Fund with TSM Funds if this project cannot be funded with Capacity Funds and fund the maintenance of the system first; LRTP Capacity Priority #1).			NA	\$700,000
		FDOT Comments: No comments provided.				

Transportation Alternatives (TA) Project Priorities					
Priority	FDOT WPI#	Project	Limits	Description	Phases
1	NA	Rails with Trails Project (Panama City)	Bayline Railroad from Hathaway Bridge to Frankford Avenue.	Planning and design of a multi-use trail along the Bayline Railroad tracks from the central portion of Panama City to its western end.Planning and design of a multi-use trail along the Bayline Railroad tracks from the central portion of Panama City to its western end.	PE

**Figure 10. Example (Bay County TPO) of varied types of tables depending on the priority list within an LOPP**

A smaller portion (n=7) use methods to help FDOT identify top priorities across multiple lists, and 6 dedicate sections to regional project priorities. Only a few (n=5) explain their selection and ranking methodology, and even fewer include other projects for informational purposes (n=3) or non-project items like planning funds and surveys (n=1).

When asked about how they present their overall top priorities to FDOT, most respondents provided unique methods, such as creating separate top priority lists, using notations within lists, grouping projects by priority order, or preparing funding plans that consider top priorities and available funds (Table 3).

**Table 3. Results for MPO Survey Question 3: When you submit the LOPP to your FDOT District, does the document include... (check all that apply)**

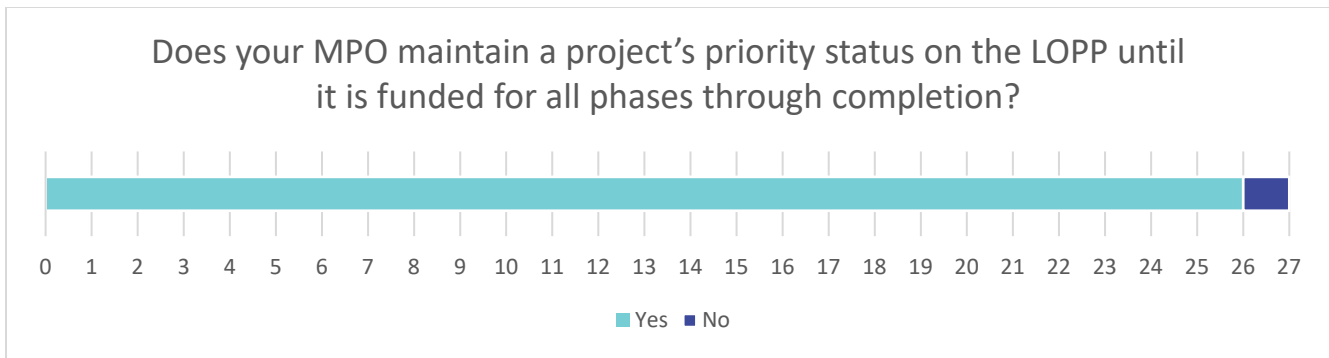
What is included in your LOPP document?	Percentage	Count
A number rank for each project in each list.	100%	27
A list in which the topmost projects on the list represent higher priority and the lower projects represent lower priority (i.e., the relative position on the list indicates prioritization).	70%*	19
All projects listed in a table format with additional information about each project such as project sponsor, category, location, description, type, performance measures, phases, costs, funding source, etc.	63%	17
Projects from past LOPPs that are now fully funded (for informational purposes).	55%	15
Different types of tables with varying information depending on which priority list the project is on.	37%	10
If there are multiple lists, a method that allows FDOT to identify which projects across all lists are the MPOs overall top priorities.	26%	7
A section dedicated to regional project priorities.	22%	6
An explanation of the methodology or rationale for selecting and ranking projects.	18%	5
Other projects for informational purposes only.	11%	3
Other non-project items.	4%	1

\*Since most LOPPs contain two or more categories of projects in table form, some tables each contain a #1, #2, #3, etc. ranking—relative position within the table denotes priority for that category, but overall position within the entire LOPP across tables/categories does not necessarily denote a project’s priority ranking; see Figure 10 for example.

### Projects Maintained on an LOPP Through Completion

26 out of 27 Florida MPO representatives indicated that they maintain a project's priority status on the LOPP until it is funded through all phases of completion (Figure 11). The lone respondent who answered "no" to maintaining project priority until full funding provided insight into their strategy. They emphasized that project readiness, available funding, and clear communication with FDOT are more critical factors in advancing projects than their ranking on a list.





**Figure 11. Results for MPO Survey Question 4: “Some MPOs maintain a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases through completion. Does your MPO provide this type of information in the LOPP?”**

For the 26 MPO representatives that answered yes to maintaining a project’s priority status on the LOPP through completion—when asked if this practice affects their ability to advance other projects, responses were split. Nine of the respondents indicated a perceived positive impact, either directly or indirectly, on their ability to secure funding or manage the project funding process effectively.

Respondents who believed maintaining a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases was beneficial highlighted the following points:

- Resource tracking: Maintaining priority status helps in tracking the project through to completion, providing clarity on the status and ensuring all phases are funded.
- Continued communication of priority: It ensures that projects remain a priority for the district and other stakeholders, even if there are changes to schedules or funding.
- Grant and funding opportunities: Having a clear priority list can aid in understanding and securing grant or earmark funding.
- Demonstrating success: It helps to show that projects listed on the LOPP eventually get funded, demonstrating the effectiveness of the planning and funding process.
- Coordination and transparency: Maintaining a project on the list enhances coordination with local project management and provides accurate information to stakeholders. Also, one representative noted that maintaining projects on the list serves as a reference for how much funding is allocated without impacting other projects negatively. It keeps elected officials informed about the ongoing programming of priority projects.

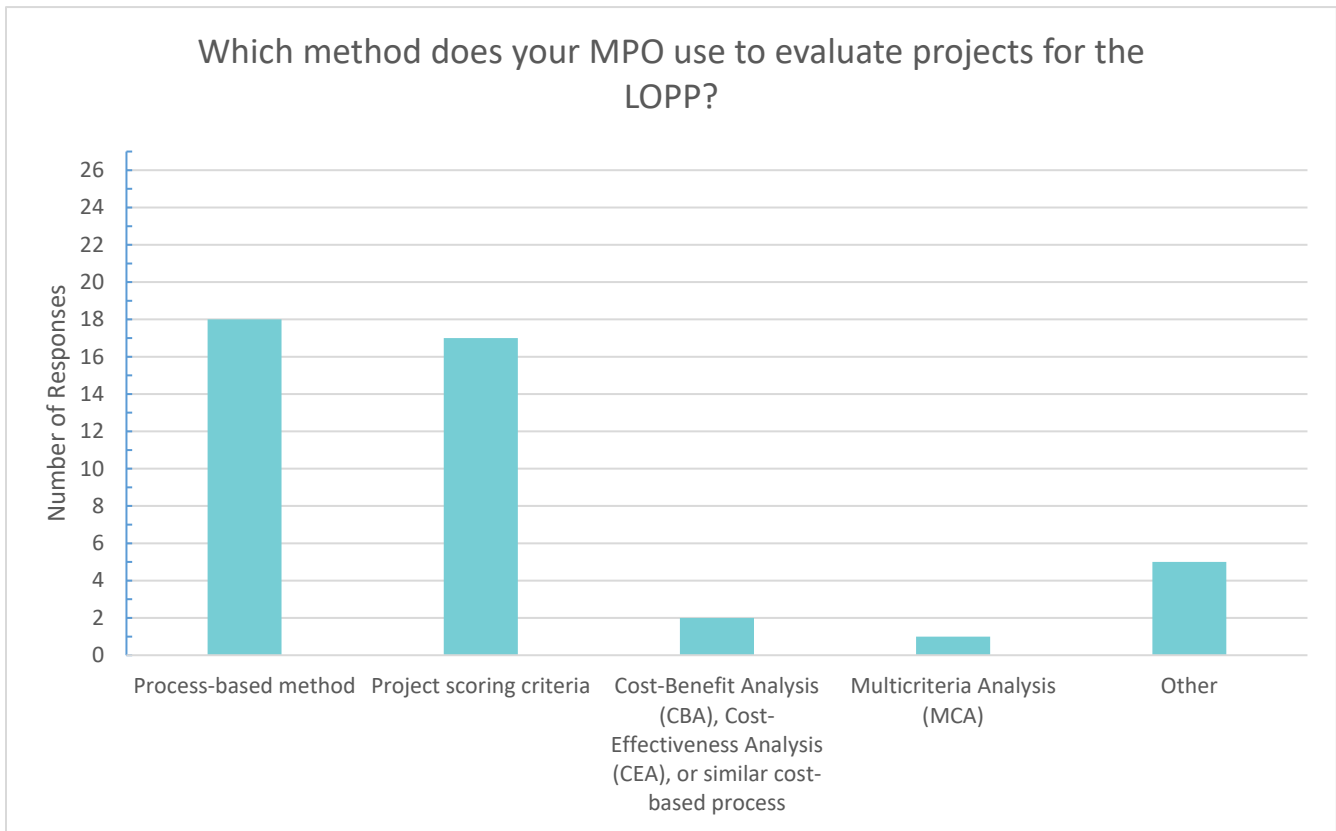
Nine respondents felt that maintaining a project’s priority status on the LOPP through completion did not affect their efforts either positively or negatively. Three MPO representatives wrote responses which reflected concerns about the potential negative impacts of maintaining projects on the LOPP, particularly related to funding inefficiencies, prioritization issues, and overall project advancement challenges. These respondents noted that highly ranked projects on the LOPP will sometimes receive funding for early phases (i.e., PD&E, design, and right-of-way acquisition), but then become stymied at the construction phase. This can result in significant investments without project completion, as FDOT programs new, less expensive phases of other projects. This disrupts project advancement, allowing

lower-priority projects to progress over higher-priority ones, undermining MPOs' strategic planning and efficiency.

## **MPO Methods for Evaluating Projects**

The literature review revealed that project scoring criteria, process-based methods, Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) (or similar cost-based process), and multicriteria analysis (MCA) are the most common methods used in the evaluation of projects, which is why these approaches were included in the survey of MPOs. Project scoring criteria involve the use of predefined benchmarks to systematically evaluate and rank projects based on specific factors such as safety, cost, environmental impact, and community benefit. This method allows for an objective comparison of projects, ensuring that those with the highest scores are prioritized. Process-based methods typically involve gathering input from member agencies, transportation commissions, or committees to recommend projects. This approach emphasizes stakeholder collaboration and considers the expertise and local knowledge of involved parties to guide project selection and prioritization. Cost-benefit analysis assesses the financial efficiency of projects by comparing the total expected costs against the anticipated benefits, helping decision makers determine whether the benefits justify the costs. Multicriteria analysis goes a step further by evaluating projects based on multiple criteria, often beyond just financial considerations, integrating various quantitative and qualitative factors into a single decision making framework

The evaluation methods used by Florida's 27 MPOs to develop their LOPPs are varied. The majority of MPOs (n=18) indicated that they use a process-based approach for project evaluation. This typically involves recommendations from member agencies, transportation commissions, or committees. Many MPOs (n=17) employ project scoring criteria, a method that allows for systematic evaluation based on predefined benchmarks. Only two MPOs indicated that they use either a Cost-Benefit Analysis or cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) to assess the financial efficiency of their projects, and one respondent indicated that their MPO employs a multicriteria analysis algorithm to evaluate project viability (Figure 12).



**Figure 12. Results for MPO Survey Question 2: “Which method does your MPO use to evaluate projects for the LOPP?” (Check all that apply)**

Five respondents chose the "other" option, shedding light on unique, tailored methods. One respondent described a two-step process where basic eligibility is first identified in plans adopted by reference in the LRTP. In the second step, projects are ranked by committees based on scoring criteria outlined in the plans (i.e., they used a combination of the project scoring criteria and process-based methods). Another respondent noted that their MPO prioritized projects according to the FTP, LRTP, and Transit Development Plan (TDP) priorities.

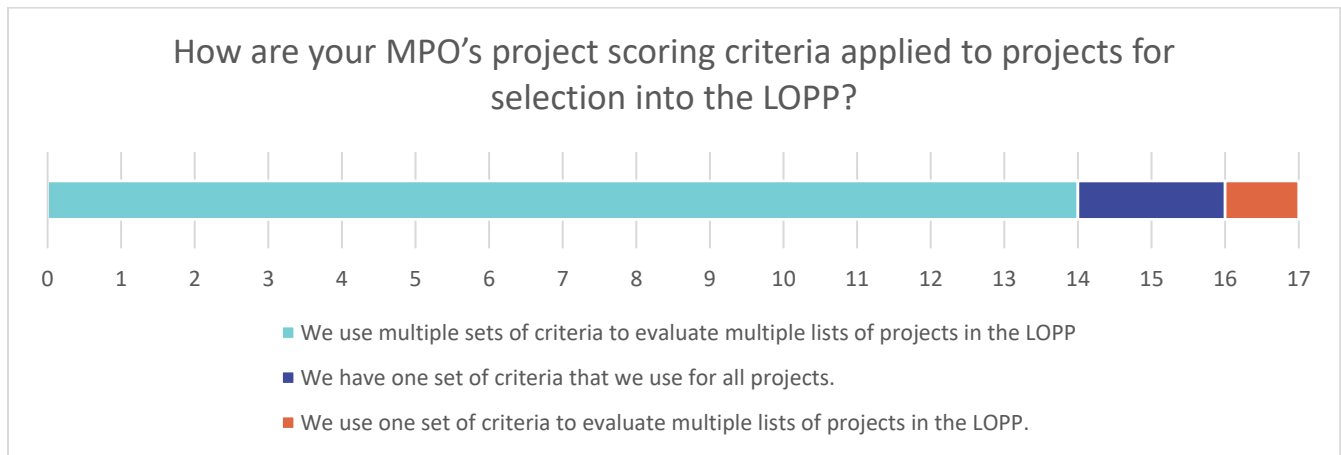
A third respondent shared that they categorized projects according to their potential to improve performance measures, mainly federally required ones, but also including measures for multimodal access and volume-to-capacity (V/C) for capacity projects. These projects are listed in order of their impact on performance measures, with a focus on good repair, safety, travel time reliability, and multimodal access. The fourth respondent mentioned the use of a “LOPP Survey Development Tool” that requires project submittals per specific criteria. This respondent also employed the "process-based method."

The last respondent that chose the “other” option noted that some priorities are so old that the scoring and ranking no longer apply. These projects were referred to as "legacy projects" and include projects with partially completed PD&E or design phases but no funding in sight for right-of-way

acquisition or construction phases. The survey revealed that the majority of MPOs rely on a combination of process-based methods, project scoring criteria, and occasionally more complex analyses to determine which projects make it on to the LOPP.

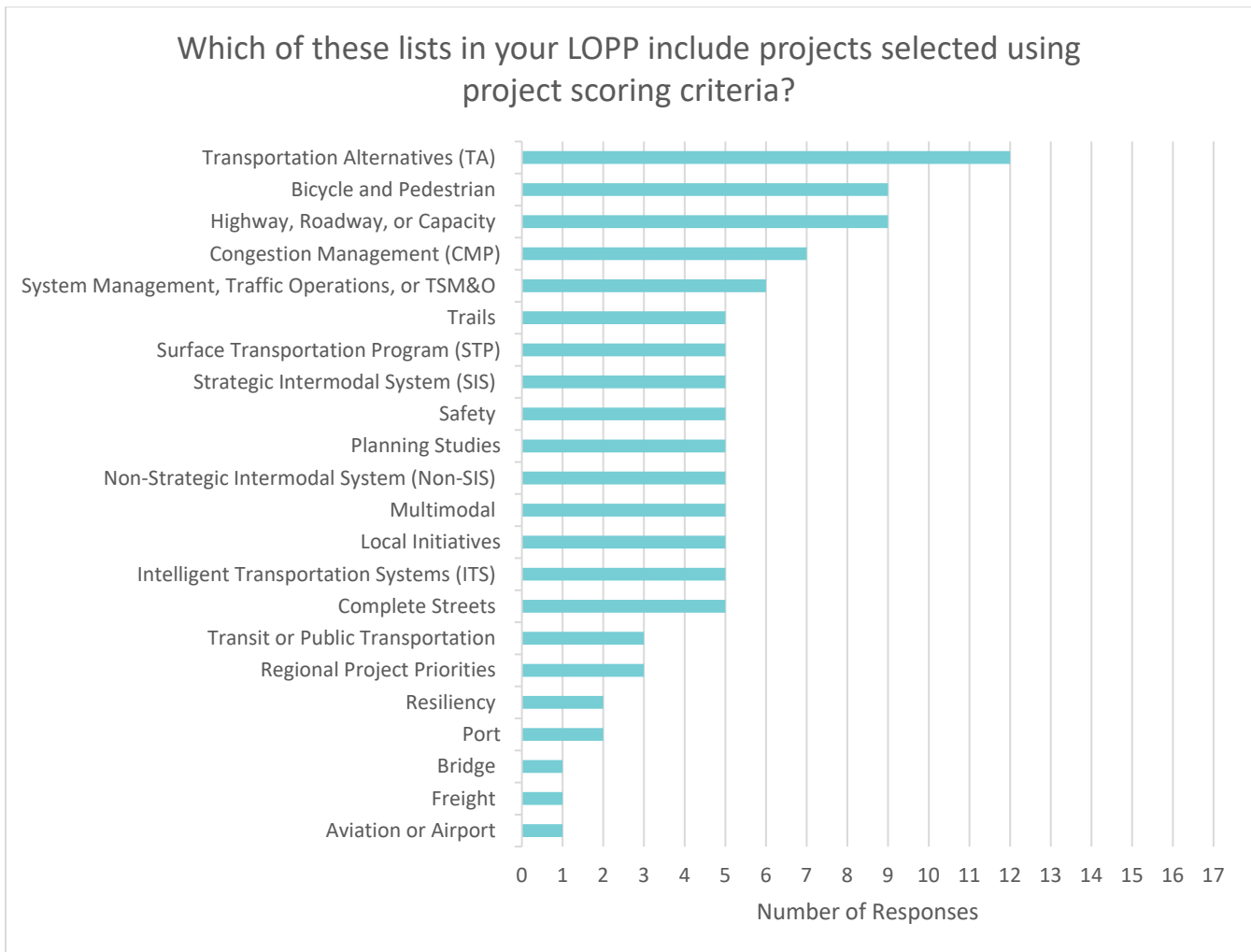
### Applying Project Scoring Criteria

Among the 17 respondents who selected “project scoring criteria” when asked which method their MPO uses to evaluate projects for the LOPP, most (14) indicated that they use multiple sets of criteria to evaluate multiple lists of projects in the LOPP. Two indicated that they had one set of criteria that they used for all projects, and one indicated that they use one set of criteria to evaluate multiple lists of projects in the LOPP (Figure 13).



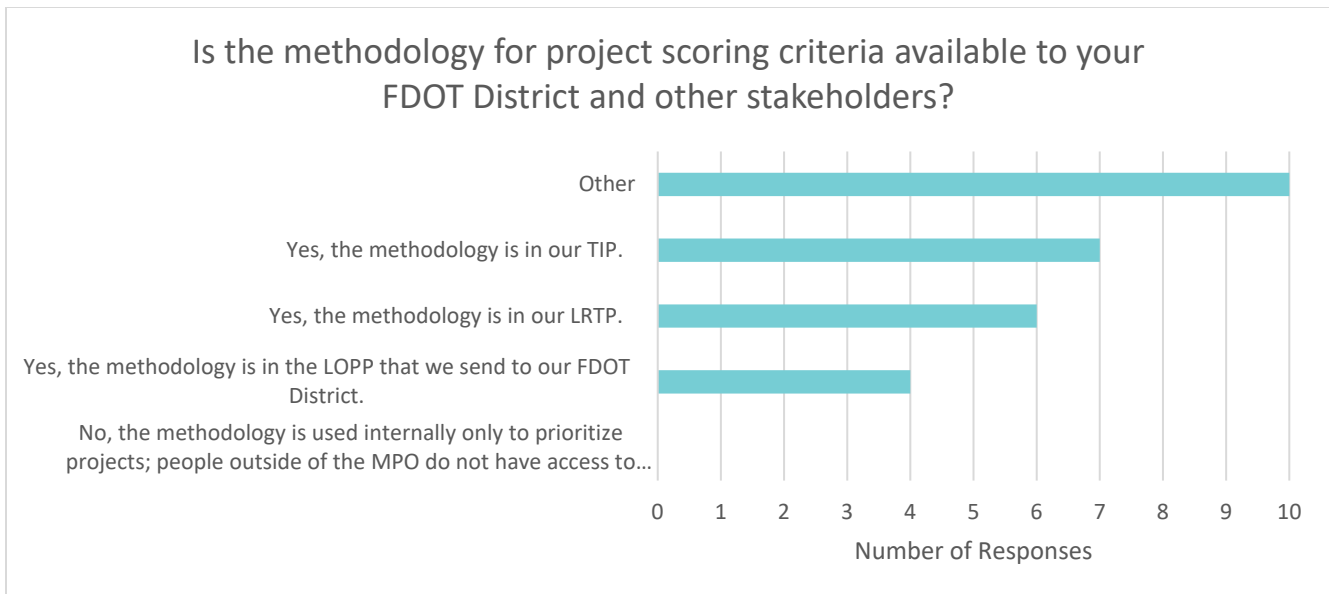
**Figure 13. Results for MPO Survey Question 2.a: “How are your MPO’s project scoring criteria applied to projects for selection into the LOPP?”**

In determining which project lists within their LOPP incorporate project scoring criteria, the survey revealed that Transportation Alternative (TA) priorities were the most commonly selected choice, chosen by 70% of respondents. Additionally, Bicycle and Pedestrian project priorities, along with Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities, each garnered selections from over half of the respondents (53%) (Figure 14).



**Figure 14. Results for MPO Survey Question 2.b: “Which of these lists in your LOPP include projects selected using project scoring criteria?” (Check all that apply)**

The majority of MPOs make their project scoring methodologies available to FDOT districts and other stakeholders. Responses indicated a variety of dissemination methods: seven MPOs detailed their criteria within the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), six integrated them into their Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTP), and four shared methodologies directly with their FDOT districts. Notably, none of the respondents restricted access to the methodology from people external to the MPO. Out of the 17 respondents, 10 opted for the "other" option, noting that they present at public workshops, share with local governments and regional partners, and include the methodology in annual calls-for-projects (Figure 15).



**Figure 15. Results for MPO Survey Question 2.c: “Is the methodology for project scoring criteria available to your FDOT district and other stakeholders?” (Check all that apply)**

One MPO employs multicriteria analysis (MCA) when evaluating projects, a method outlined in detail in their LOPP document and on their LOPP website. This MPO’s respondent also confirmed sharing the algorithm’s categories and weighting methodology with key stakeholders, including their FDOT district, stakeholders, and the broader public.

### How Districts Integrate MPO Priorities During the Development of the Tentative Work Program

Integrating MPO priorities into the Tentative Work Program involves a collaborative process aimed at aligning regional transportation needs with available funding. Based on survey responses, districts share common elements in this process such as regular communication with MPOs, coordination meetings, and a structured approach to project evaluation and selection.

#### Common Practices Across Districts

*Regular communication:* All districts engage in regular communication with MPOs throughout the development of the Tentative Work Program. This includes meetings, discussions, and feedback sessions to align priorities and refine project details.

*Coordination meetings:* Most districts hold coordination meetings between MPO staff and district liaisons/work program teams. These meetings facilitate the exchange of information, project updates, and ensure that MPO priorities are considered in the Tentative Work Program.

*A structured process:* Each district has some type of structured process for integrating their MPOs’ LOPP into the Tentative Work Program. This process generally involves reviewing LOPPs, assessing project readiness, and making adjustments to fit funding and planning timelines.

### *District-Specific Approaches*

*Approach to project evaluation:* District 4 stands out with its Scoping Refinement Team (SRT), which vets LOPP submissions to determine project readiness and prioritization for programming in the Work Program. This detailed review process is meant to ensure that projects are well-prepared before inclusion in the Tentative Work Program.

*Timeline and phased engagement:* District 7 utilizes a detailed schedule spanning several months, with specific milestones for MPO coordination and feedback. This includes virtual and in-person presentations to MPO committees and boards, emphasizing comprehensive engagement and detailed reporting of funded priorities.

*Bottom-up development:* District 2 emphasizes a bottom-up approach, involving local governments and MPOs from the initial stages of project identification. This collaborative effort is meant to ensure that projects align closely with community needs and priorities, particularly focusing on SU funded projects<sup>2</sup> derived from the LOPP.

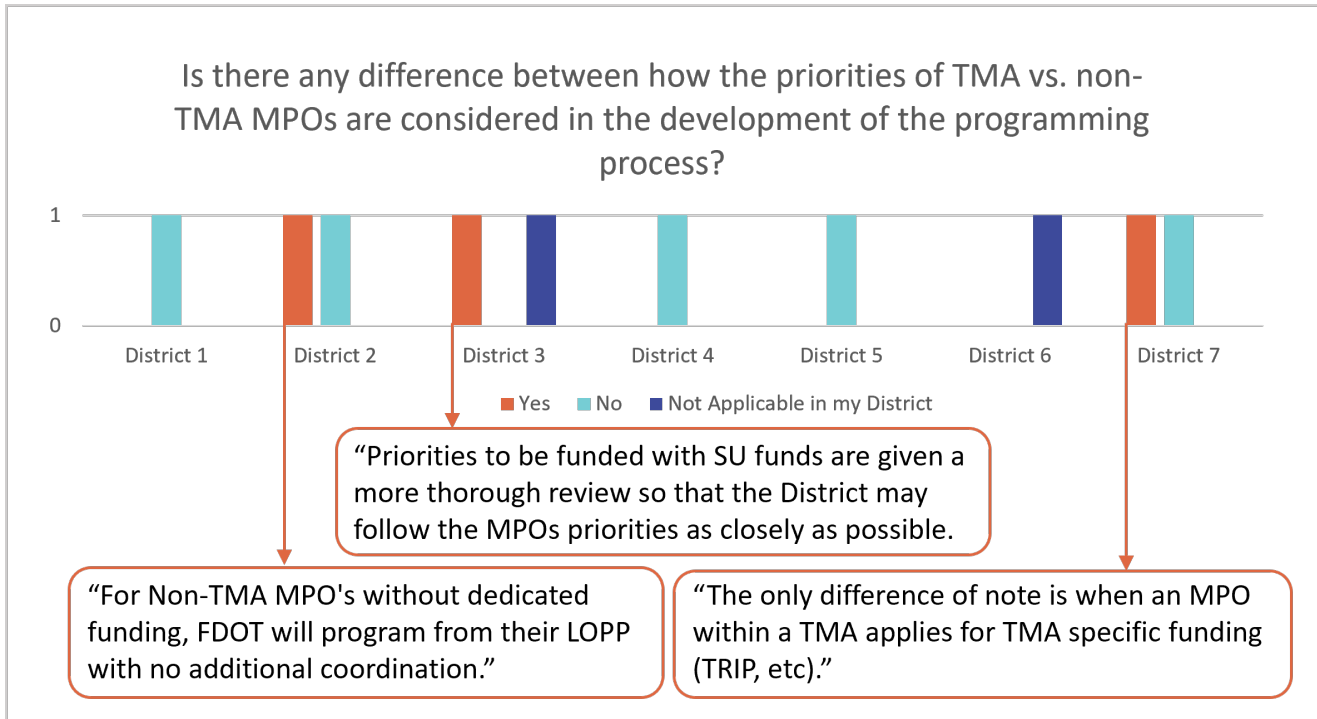
*Early engagement and feedback:* District 5 initiates discussions with MPO Executive Directors early in the process, gathering insights and considerations to refine project planning before formal Tentative Work Program development. This proactive engagement is meant to help incorporate nuanced project-specific details into the Tentative Work Program.

### *Difference between TMA and non-TMA MPO considerations*

When district representatives were asked how they differentiate between the LOPPs of Transportation Management Area (TMA) and non-TMA MPOs during the programming process, the survey revealed diverse perspectives. Out of the ten respondents, five indicated that there were no distinctions in how priorities were considered between TMAs and non-TMAs. Three district representatives noted specific differences: one emphasized a more thorough review process for projects to be funded with SU funds, while another stated that non-TMA MPOs without dedicated funding are directly programmed from their LOPP without additional coordination. Additionally, another respondent highlighted differences in how TMAs seek and utilize TMA-specific funding programs like TRIP (Figure 16).

---

<sup>2</sup> SU funds refer to federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program – Urban Attributable funds. These are federal transportation funds allocated for use in urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or more, known as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs).

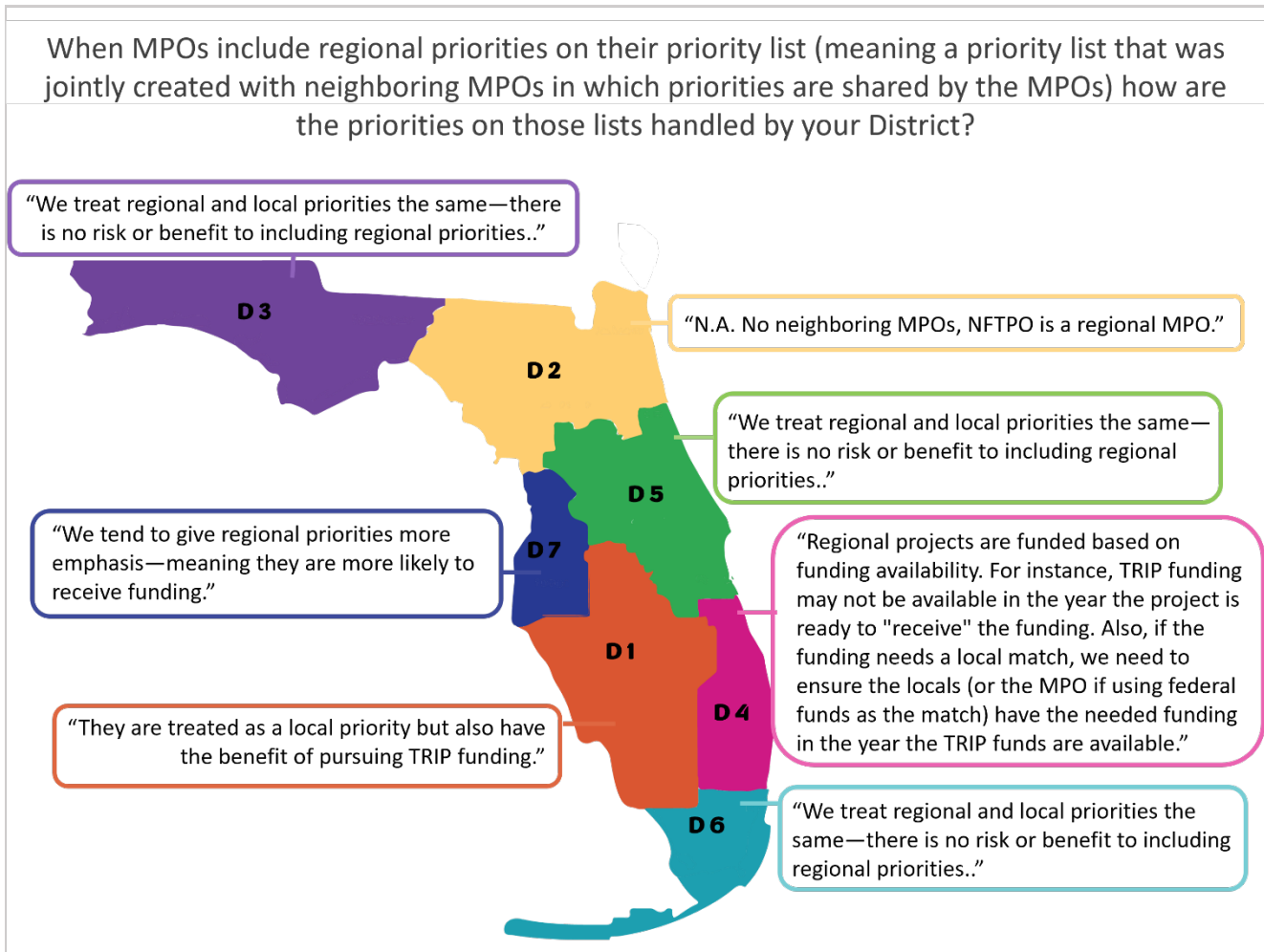


**Figure 16. Response to MPO Survey Question 2: Is there any difference between how the priorities of TMA vs. non-TMA MPOs are considered in the development of the programming process?’**

*Handling of regional priorities in the LOPP*

District representatives were also asked about how they handle priorities listed jointly by multiple MPOs as regional priorities. Among the responses, most districts indicated that they treat regional and local priorities equally, perceiving no particular risk or benefit in including regional priorities. One district that had two representatives complete the survey showed a split response, with one representative emphasizing that regional priorities are given more weight and are more likely to secure funding, while the other stated that local and regional project priorities were treated equally. One district representative remarked that they treat regional priorities as local but noted the potential benefit of pursuing TRIP funding. Another district representative considered regional projects contingent on funding availability and local match requirements (Figure 17).





**Figure 17. Responses to MPO Survey Question 5: “When MPOs include regional priorities on their priority list (meaning a priority list that was jointly created with neighboring MPOs in which priorities are shared by the MPOs) how are the priorities on those lists handled by your district?”**

## Communication between MPO and District Staff

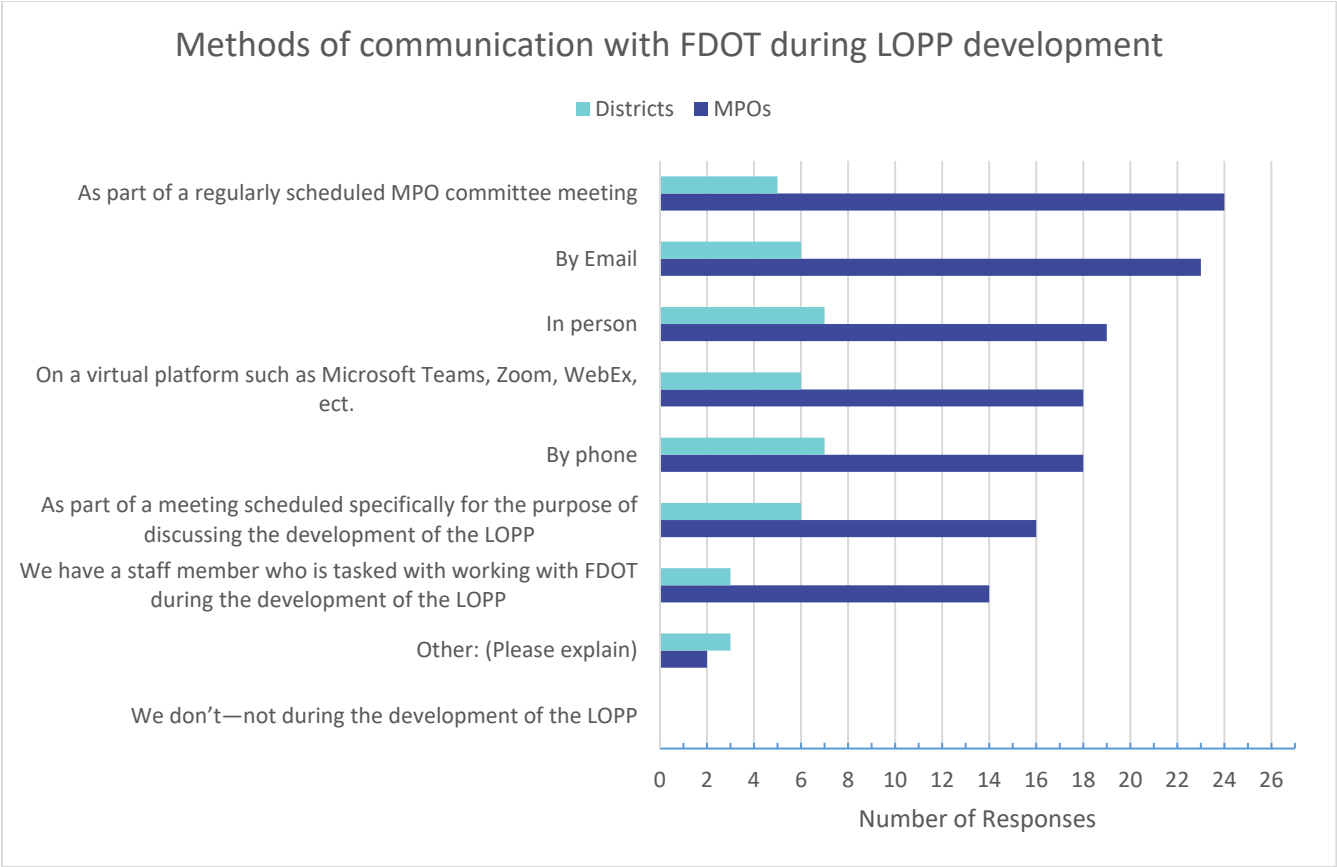
### Communication During LOPP Development

When asked about their methods of communication with district staff during the development of the LOPP, MPO representatives indicated that they use a variety of approaches. The most common method, chosen by 24 respondents, was communicating as part of a regularly scheduled MPO committee meeting. Close behind, 23 respondents communicated by email. In-person communication was selected by 19 respondents, while both phone and virtual platforms like Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or WebEx were each selected by 18 respondents.

Additionally, 16 respondents communicated as part of a meeting specifically scheduled to discuss the LOPP, and 14 respondents indicated that they have a staff member tasked with working directly with district staff during the LOPP development. Two respondents chose the "other" option, providing

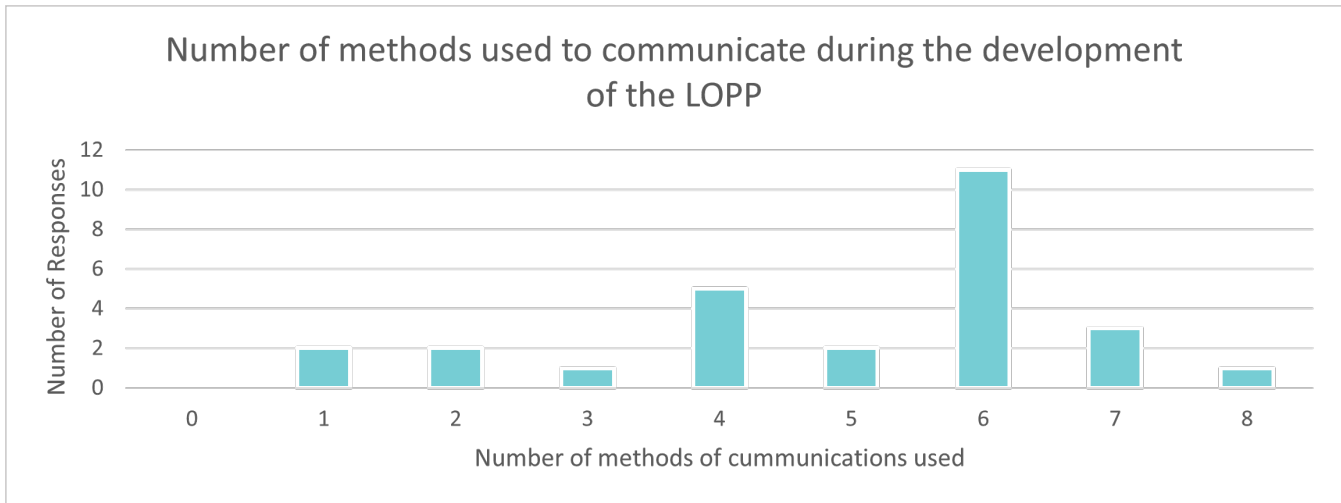
additional details: one mentioned coordination as part of a standing monthly meeting between district and MPO staff on various topics, and the other noted weekly MPO/FDOT staff coordination meetings, highlighting their strong working relationship with their district (Figure 18).

When posed with a similar question, all seven district representatives indicated robust communication practices during the development of MPO LOPPs. Specifically, they commonly engaged through phone and in-person meetings, utilized virtual platforms, communicated via email, and participated in scheduled LOPP-specific meetings. Additionally, some districts integrated communications into regularly scheduled MPO committee meetings and assigned specific staff members to facilitate these interactions. Districts also emphasized continuous year-round coordination and responsiveness to MPO concerns outside of formal meetings, ensuring ongoing dialogue and support.



**Figure 18. Results for MPO Survey Question 5: “How does your MPO communicate with FDOT during the development of your LOPP?” (Check all that apply) and District Survey Question 3 “How does your district engage with MPOs during the development of their LOPPs?”**

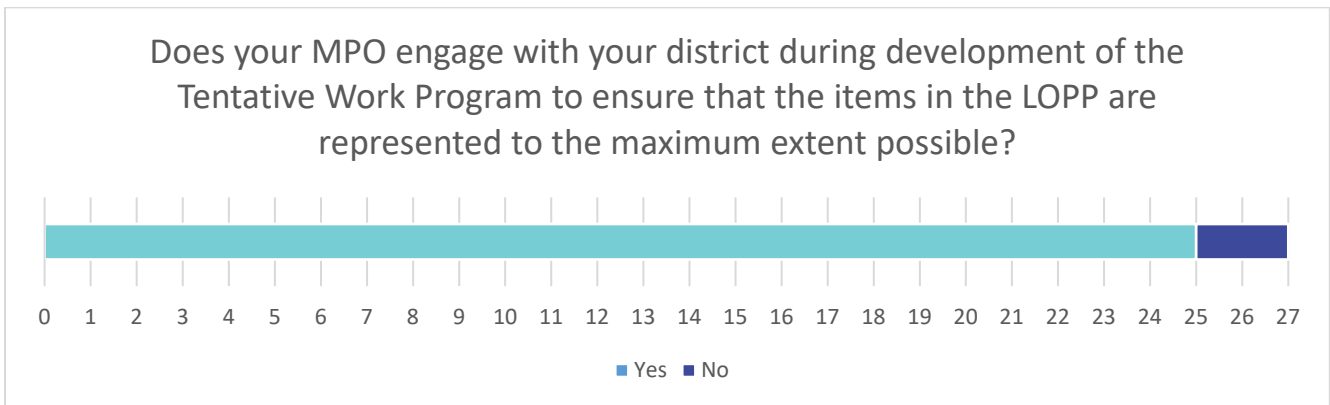
The responses also revealed that MPOs and districts often use multiple methods to ensure effective communication. Most respondents (81%) indicated they used four or more different methods, with 56% using at least six different methods to communicate during the LOPP development process (Figure 19).



**Figure 19. Number of methods used to communicate during the development of the LOPP**

### Communication During Tentative Work Program Development

In response to whether MPOs engage with their district during the development of the Tentative Work Program to ensure LOPP items are represented, 25 MPOs confirmed they did, while only two indicated they did not (Figure 20). All district representatives answered that they actively engage with their respective MPOs during Tentative Work Program development, employing various methods to ensure their priorities are considered.



**Figure 20. Results for MPO Survey Question 6: “Does your MPO engage with your district during development of the Tentative Work Program to ensure that the items in the LOPP are represented to the maximum extent possible?”**

The detailed responses from the 25 MPOs that engage with FDOT include the following approaches:

- **Presenting adopted priorities:** Some MPOs hold meetings with their district to present their adopted priorities, ensuring these are considered during the Tentative Work Program development.
- **Regular and sporadic communication:** MPOs commonly employ a mix of regular and sporadic communication strategies, including weekly meetings, email exchanges, and one-time meetings to review their LOPPs before the district initiates the work program cycle. Coordination often involves the use of both formal and informal channels, such as phone calls and virtual meetings, to negotiate project funding and phasing details.
- **Coordination with district liaisons:** Many MPOs rely on their district liaison for consistent communication and coordination.
- **Review and feedback:** Reviewing the draft Tentative Work Program and forwarding comments to district staff for consideration is another method used to ensure alignment with LOPP priorities.
- **Engagement from the outset:** Some MPOs highlighted the importance of engaging with their district from the outset of the LOPP development process, ensuring priorities align early on.

According to the ten district representatives surveyed regarding the development of the Tentative Work Program, similar engagement strategies were employed as during the development of the LOPP. Specifically highlighted was a focus on vetting LOPP projects, providing feedback, and coordinating regularly to discuss project status and funding options. One district representative mentioned that they regularly coordinate with MPOs to discuss programming details, such as project funding status and cost changes. They also provide the MPOs with choices on which projects can proceed with funding and which ones might need to be delayed or adjusted based on available resources.

In response to a question about whether districts reach out for clarification on the LOPP during the development of the Tentative Work Program, all district respondents confirmed they do. One noted that their district is deeply involved in the LOPP development process, often preparing project scopes at the request of local governments.

### Communication After Tentative Work Program development

After the development of the Tentative Work Program, MPOs continue to engage with their districts to understand how their LOPP was utilized. The methods of engagement include:

- **Informal conversations:** Informal discussions between MPO and district staff regarding the district's rationale for including or excluding LOPP projects in the Tentative Work Program.
- **Regular meetings:** Continued weekly and monthly meetings with district staff to help ensure alignment between LOPP and Tentative Work Program priorities.
- **Coordination with district liaisons:** Continued coordination with the assigned district liaison to translate MPO priorities and rationale to district Work Program staff.
- **Formal presentations and reviews:** Districts present the Tentative Work Program to MPO boards and committees, explaining how LOPP projects were incorporated.
- **Formal analysis and feedback:** MPO staff analyze the Tentative Work Program and provide feedback through formal letters or comments from advisory committees.

- **Annual partnering meetings:** Some MPOs hold annual meetings to review funded projects and discuss any unresolved needs.
- **Public review and presentation:** The Tentative Work Program is made available for public review and presented to the MPO for acceptance.

### Resolving Miscommunications Regarding the LOPP

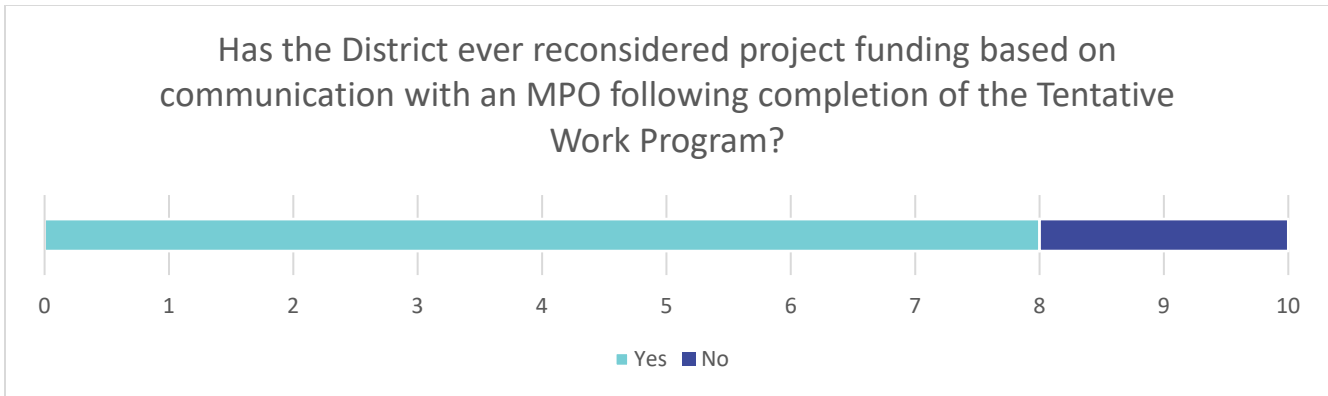
If there's a misunderstanding regarding MPO priorities, all district representatives confirmed that they reach out for clarification. According to district representatives surveyed, when an MPO brings up a misunderstanding or confusion about their top priorities during the development of the Tentative Work Program, district representatives employ various strategies to resolve the issue. If possible, adjustments are made immediately. If adjustments can't be made in the current cycle, the project is flagged for future consideration or pursued in future work program cycles. Some representatives noted that this scenario is rare due to the robust communication and initial meetings that clarify priorities. In cases where internal resolution is not feasible, formal amendments or modifications are used. The overall goal is to ensure that top priorities are clearly ranked and discussed to avoid any misunderstandings.

### Communicating Unfunded Priorities

When top priorities from MPOs aren't funded, district respondents detailed various methods of communication between district and MPO staff. Regular communication and strong relationships between MPO liaisons and MPO staff were highlighted as crucial throughout the process. One district respondent explained that district staff discuss funding with MPOs before programming, and the release of the Work Program serves as a final check. Presentations to MPO committees and boards and weekly coordination meetings are standard practices. Some districts hold multiple meetings to clarify expectations and funding outcomes, using both virtual and in-person presentations to solicit feedback.

### Reconsidering Project Funding Based on MPO Communication

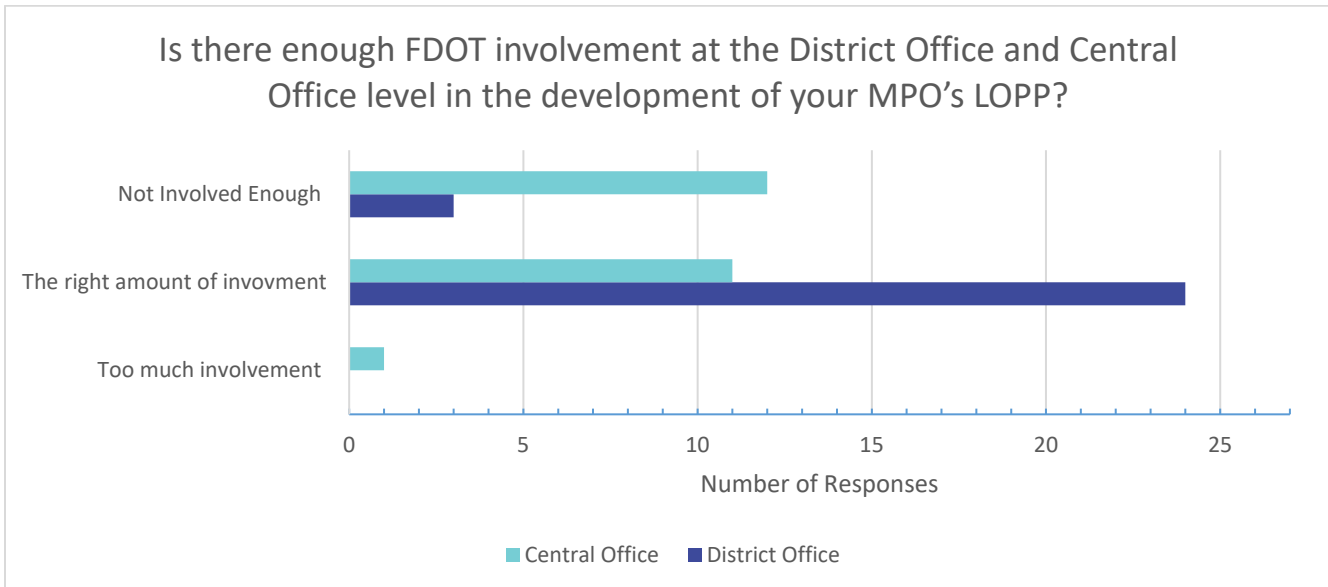
When asked if their districts have ever reconsidered project funding based on communication with an MPO after the completion of the Tentative Work Program, eight out of ten respondents said yes (Figure 21). Upon further inquiry, only two of these reconsiderations were due to miscommunications about project priorities in the LOPP. The other six cited various reasons including local governments financially partnering to retain a project within a specific fiscal year, changes in development altering project needs, adjustments related to funding levels for specific priorities, shifts in priorities due to new funding, and other factors unrelated to miscommunication.



**Figure 21. Response to District Survey Question 8: “Has the district ever reconsidered project funding based on communication with an MPO following completion of the Tentative Work Program?”**

**Level of Involvement from the District Office and Central Office**

In response to a question posed to MPO representatives regarding FDOT involvement in the development of MPO LOPPs, most respondents indicated satisfaction with District Office involvement, with 24 out of 26 stating it was adequate. They appreciated the right amount of engagement, highlighting effective coordination and communication between MPOs and their respective District Offices. However, opinions were more divided regarding Central Office involvement, with 11 respondents feeling it was adequate and 12 stating it was insufficient (four MPO representatives did not answer this question). Some respondents expressed that Central Office oversight and input could be more extensive to enhance alignment and support for MPO priorities. One respondent felt that Central Office involvement was more involved than they thought was necessary (Figure 22).



**Figure 22. Results for MPO Survey Question 12: “In your opinion, is there enough FDOT involvement at the District Office and Central Office level in the development of your MPO’s LOPP?”**

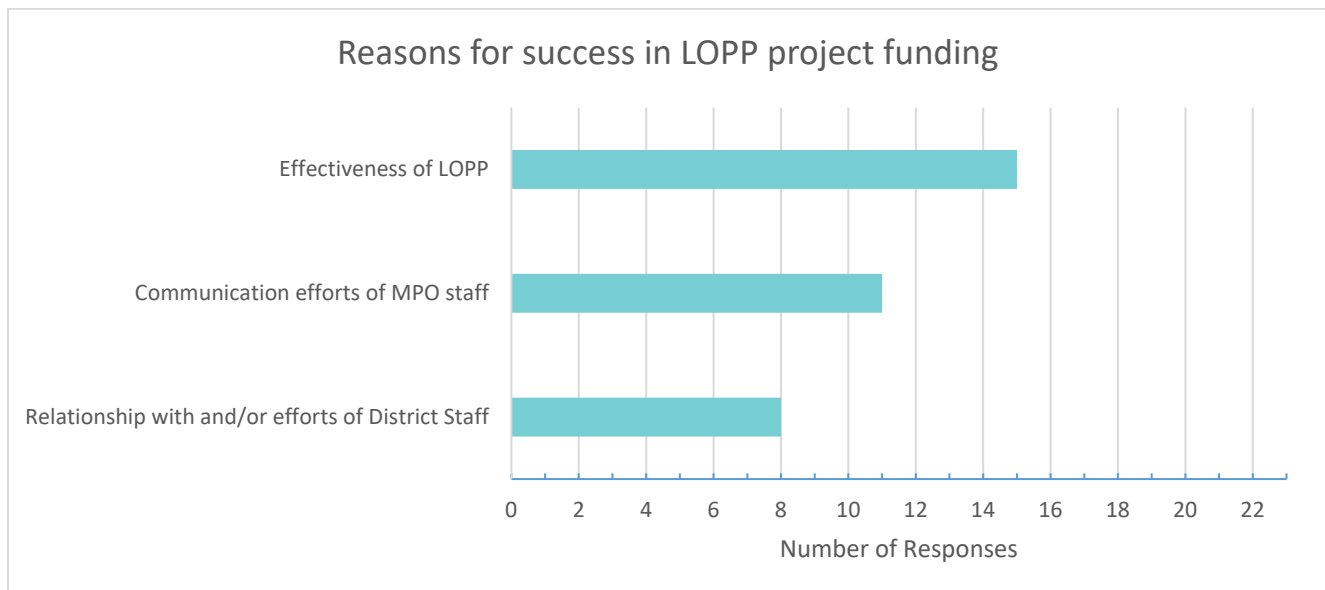
## Success Factors and Challenges in LOPP Project Funding

### Reasons for Success in LOPP Project Funding

Respondents highlighted several key factors contributing to their success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded. While the responses were open-ended, the success factors described can be categorized into three main themes: the effectiveness of the LOPP in communicating priorities, the communication efforts of MPO staff, and the MPO's relationship with district staff (Figure 23).

Fifteen out of twenty-three respondents explicitly stated that the clarity and consistency of the LOPP document were significant contributors to their success. The LOPP's ability to clearly communicate the MPO's priorities was seen as instrumental, with many MPOs developing detailed and consistent lists of priorities that provided their district with clear guidance on project programming. Respondents mentioned that the LOPP effectively communicates priorities, helping their district understand and implement projects, and that stability in the LOPP over the years provides their district with consistent guidance on programming projects.

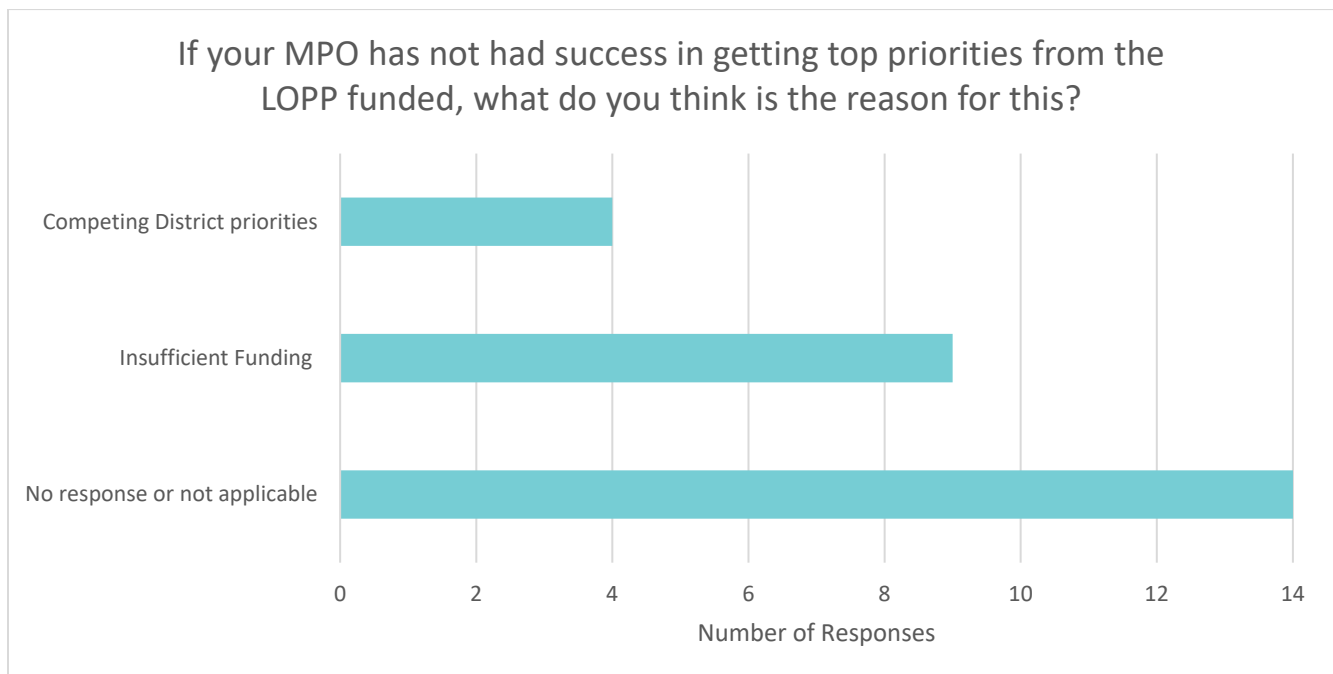
Additionally, eleven respondents highlighted the importance of proactive communication and advocacy by MPO staff. Continuous and clear communication between MPO and district staff, such as through regular meetings, emails, and presentations, was highlighted as critical for ensuring that priorities were well understood and effectively addressed. Additionally, eight respondents emphasized that beyond communication, a strong and collaborative relationship with district staff was vital for successful coordination and implementation of projects. Regular coordination meetings, a receptive attitude from district staff, and mutual understanding were identified as vital elements in the success of project funding.



**Figure 23. Summarized results for MPO Survey Question 8: “If your MPO has had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, do you believe this is because the LOPP effectively communicated priorities or for some other reason? Please explain.” (Text entry)**

## Reasons for Lack of Success in LOPP Project Funding

The primary reasons for not getting top priorities from the LOPP funded were identified as lack of available funds and competing district priorities. Out of twenty-seven respondents, fourteen either did not answer or indicated the question was not applicable to their MPO. Nine respondents cited insufficient funding as the main barrier to getting their projects funded, with statements such as "cost and limited revenue" and "lack of available funds." Four respondents mentioned that their projects were often not prioritized due to other district priorities, highlighting difficulties in balancing district and State needs with the MPO's priorities on the state system. One of these respondents mentioned Moving Florida Forward, which was made a District priority due to it being the Governor's priority. Additional details provided regarding these factors included lack of coordination and transparency in the department's decision making process, disagreements between FDOT and MPO priorities, and reduced funding availability for specific project types (Figure 24).



**Figure 24. Responses to MPO Survey Question 9: "If your MPO has not had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, what do you think is the reason for this?"**

## Barriers to Developing a Successful LOPP

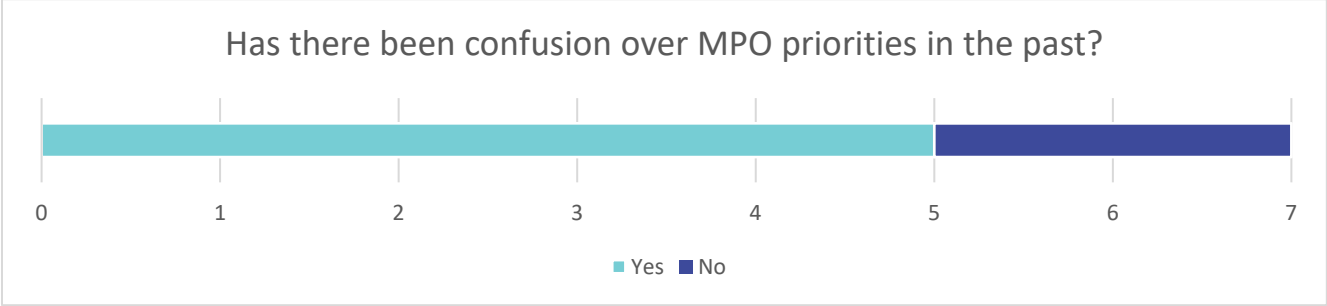
Respondents identified several barriers to developing a successful LOPP, which can be grouped into the following broad categories:

- Communication challenges
- Funding limitations
- Procedural or organizational issues



Communication challenges, both within the MPO (meaning between MPO staff and their board members) and between MPO staff and their district, were highlighted by several respondents. Some MPO representatives emphasized the importance of communication between MPO staff and different district office staff (such as with Work Program staff and the district Modal Office) and issues of transparency in programming decisions. Funding constraints and the perception of limited available funds were commonly cited as barriers. Respondents shared that there was a perception that funding for projects is limited to the new fifth year, further compounded by the existence of huge, nearly insurmountable unfunded needs. Procedural hurdles were also mentioned, such as poor project applications by local jurisdictions in response to calls for projects, political pressures, and lengthy project completion times that sometimes results in frustration by stakeholders. Examples included getting all the project information and applications in from the local governments with cost estimates and political pressure to subsidize new development at the expense of development that went before.

When district representatives were asked whether there has been confusion over MPO priorities in the past, five respondents affirmed there had been, while two indicated there had not (Figure 25).



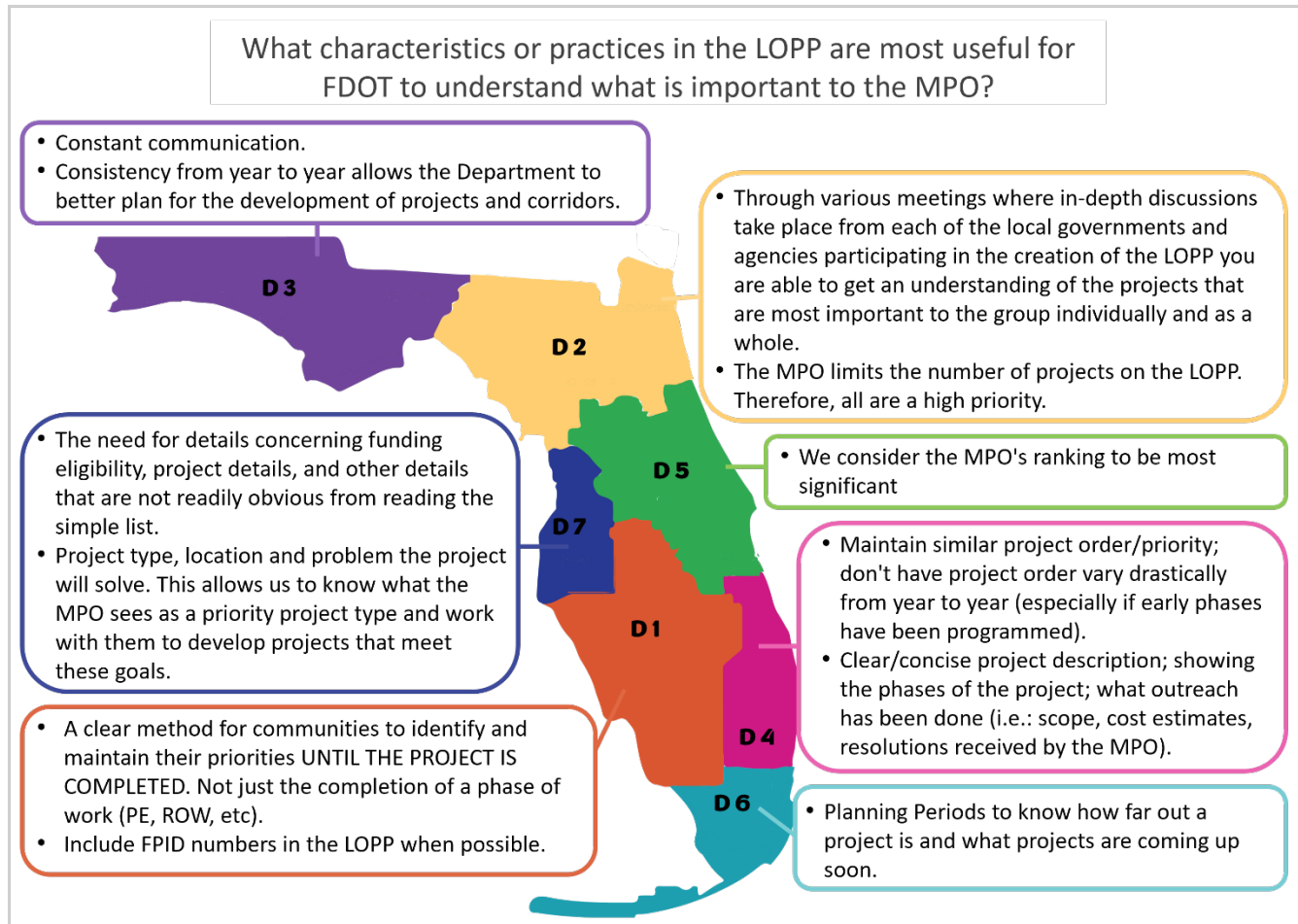
**Figure 25. Response to District Survey Question 6: “Has there been confusion over MPO priorities in the past?”**

Those who experienced confusion provided detailed explanations. One respondent pointed out recurring issues, such as discrepancies between current and following year priorities and the dilution of project prioritization due to multiple groupings of priority lists (e.g., TA, Capacity, TRIP). Another respondent noted confusion arising when MPOs have multiple programs or lists, each with a top priority, making it unclear which is the true number one priority. This situation often occurs when MPOs have several programs like Complete Streets, Local Initiatives, and Major Projects, each claiming a top spot.

**Useful Characteristics of an LOPP**

District representatives were also asked about what characteristics or practices in an LOPP are most useful for their district to understand what is important to the MPO. Consistency emerged as a key factor, allowing district staff to better plan and develop projects and corridors year after year. Detailed information about funding eligibility, project descriptions (including phases, planning periods, outreach efforts, cost estimates, received resolutions), and the problems each project aims to solve were highlighted. District respondents noted that this information helps district staff understand what the MPO’s priorities are and helps the district to collaborate effectively to meet these goals.

Maintaining clear priorities until project completion, rather than just until the completion of a work phase, was also noted as important, as was including FPID numbers in the LOPP when possible. One district representative considered MPOs' project rankings to be the most significant element of the LOPP (Figure 26).

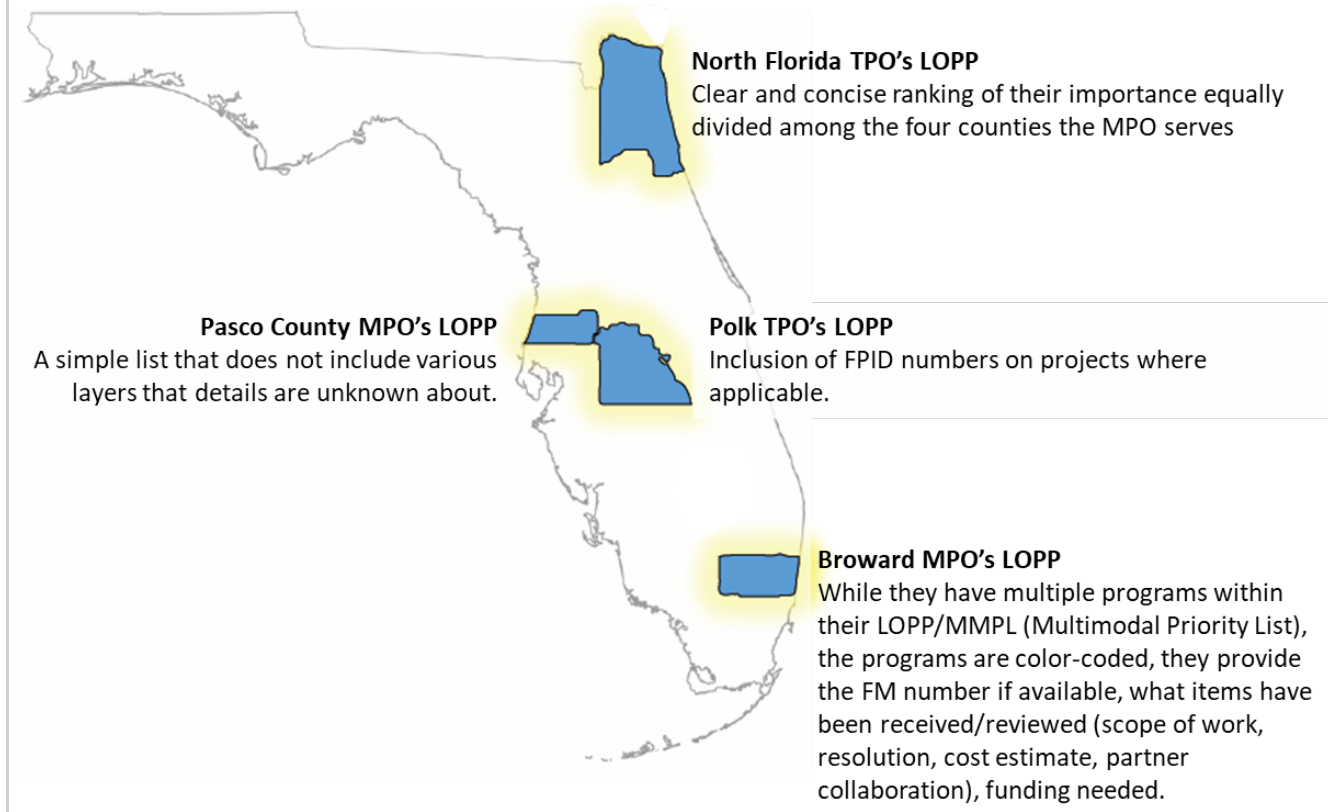


**Figure 26. Response to District Survey Question 7: “What characteristics or practices in the LOPP are most useful for FDOT to understand what is important to the MPO?”**

### Particularly Clear and Useful LOPPs

District representatives were asked whether they had ever received an LOPP that was particularly clear or useful in their district or another district. Of the ten total respondents, four indicated that they had seen or received an LOPP that was particularly clear or useful. Those four were asked to list the MPOs that produced the particularly clear or useful LOPPs and to describe what was most valuable about the LOPP. LOPPs from Pasco County MPO, Broward MPO, Polk TPO, and North Florida TPO were each identified as being particularly clear and useful. See Figure 27 for further information.

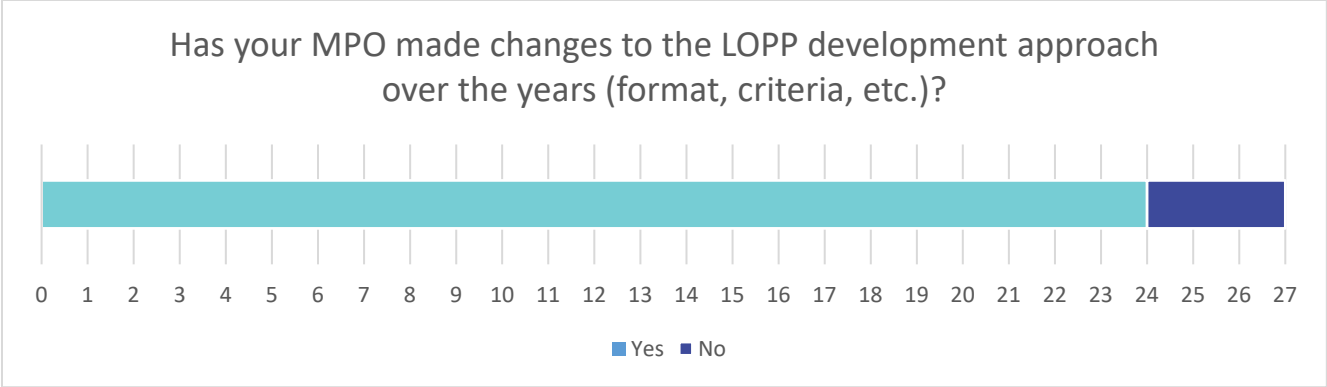
Which LOPP have you received in your District or seen in another District that is particularly clear and useful? What was most valuable about that LOPP?



**Figure 27. Responses to District Survey Question 8 and related follow up questions: “Is there an LOPP you received or have seen in another district that is particularly clear and useful?” “Which MPO developed that LOPP?” and “What about this MPO’s LOPP did you find most valuable?”**

### Changes to MPO LOPP Development Approach

Nearly all MPO respondents (24 out of 27) indicated that they made changes to their LOPP development approach over the years (Figure 28). These changes generally aimed to improve clarity, organization, and alignment with new criteria or funding categories. Types of changes made included expanding the LOPP to include new priorities, simplifying the list, implementing formal scoring processes, and updating evaluation criteria. Respondents noted that these changes improved clarity and included additional information, helped rank projects, and provided more project information on how the project impacts federal and local emphasis areas such as safety, resiliency, multimodality, innovation, tourism, and more. Furthermore, changes reportedly improved transparency and the ability to rank and track projects effectively. The changes were often driven by requests from FDOT, new funding categories, and the need to improve the overall process. Respondents highlighted that these changes had generally positive impacts, making the LOPP process more transparent, organized, and effective in securing funding for projects



**Figure 28. Results for MPO Survey Question 11: “Has your MPO made changes to the LOPP development approach over the years (format, criteria, etc.)?”**

## Chapter 5: Case Example LOPP Development Practices

This chapter offers an in-depth look at the LOPP development process of four MPOs in Florida, as well as the collaborative dynamics between those MPOs and their respective FDOT district staff. These case examples provide an examination of strategies used by MPOs and FDOT districts during the entire LOPP and Work Program development cycle to program projects in Florida’s metropolitan areas, especially projects that were identified as a top priority by Florida MPOs. The four case examples were chosen based on notable elements identified in the LOPP development process, including insights gathered from survey responses and the LOPP documents themselves. Further, the selection of case examples accounted for both metropolitan planning area population and geographic location, ensuring the representation of MPOs of varying sizes and from different FDOT districts (Figure 29 and Table 4). The case studies were further informed by interviews conducted with representatives from the four MPOs and their respective FDOT districts. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the adaptability and effectiveness of a diversity of coordination strategies across varied contexts within Florida's transportation landscape.

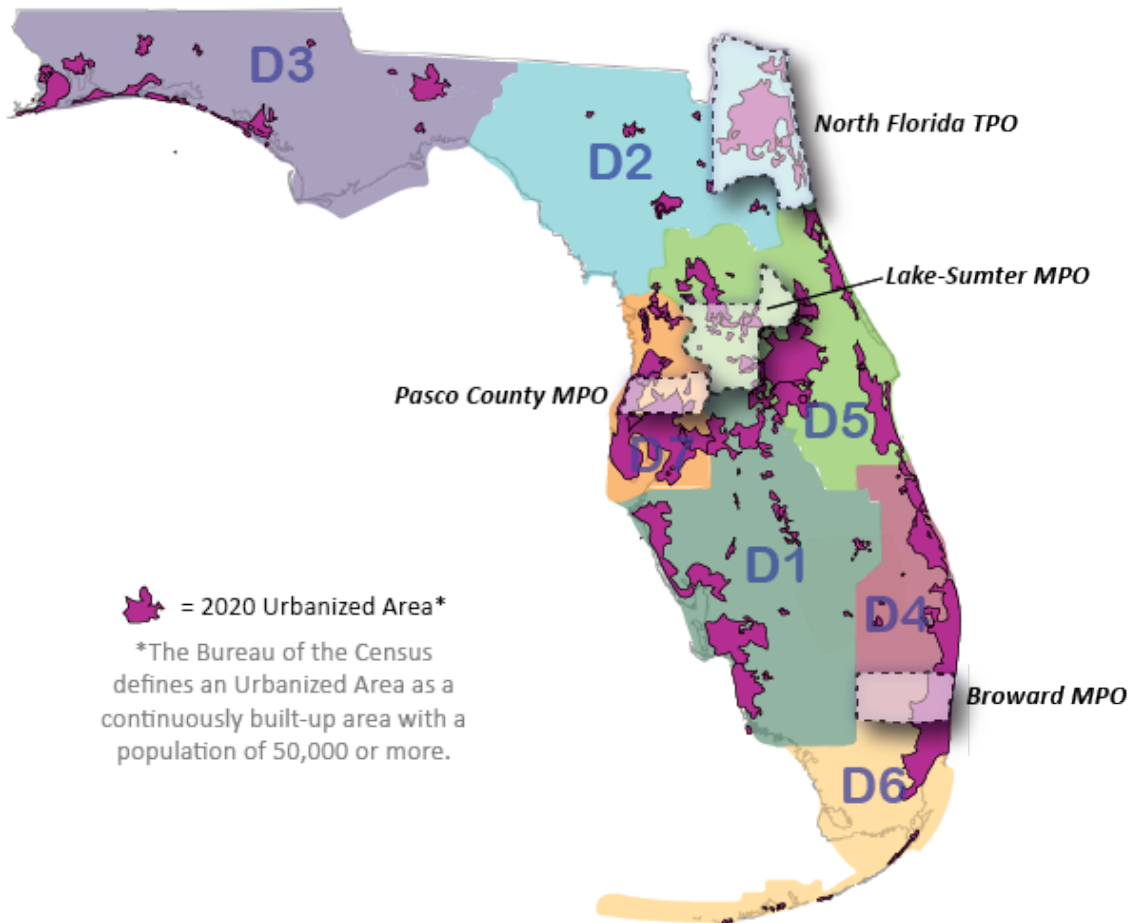


Figure 29. Case Example MPOs

**Table 4. Case Example MPO Quick Facts Comparison**

<b>MPO/TPO</b>	<b>Lake-Sumter MPO</b>	<b>Broward MPO</b>	<b>North Florida TPO</b>	<b>Pasco County MPO</b>
<b>TMA</b>	non-TMA	Miami-Ft. Lauderdale*	Jacksonville	Tampa-St. Petersburg*
<b>Urban Areas**</b>	3	1	3	3
<b>FDOT district</b>	District 5	District 4	District 2	District 7
<b># MPOs in district</b>	5	5	2	4
<b>Land Area (mi<sup>2</sup>)</b>	1,509	1,203	2,617	747
<b>MPA Population</b>	513,710	1,944,375	1,577,589	561,891
<b>Population Density</b>	341	1,617	603	753
<b>Urban Population</b>	416,861	1,944,223	1,439,721	521,183
<b>Rural Population</b>	96,847	152	137,868	40,708
<b>Counties</b>	2	1	4	1
<b>Municipalities</b>	21	31	14	6
<b>Most Populous Municipality</b>	Leesburg (24,539)	Fort Lauderdale (182,760)	Jacksonville (949,611)	Zephyrhills (17,194)

\*A Transportation Management Area (TMA) within multiple MPOs

\*\*Urban Areas are included in these counts even if they fall only partially within the MPO’s footprint. The names of all UAs are described in more detail in the individual MPO backgrounds.

Population information from U.S. Census Bureau “Population, Census, April 1, 2020” QuickFacts.

Land Area information from U.S. Census Bureau “Land area in square miles, 2020” QuickFacts.

## Lake-Sumter MPO (FDOT District 5)

### Background

Lake-Sumter MPO is one of five MPOs in FDOT District 5—the others being MetroPlan Orlando, Ocala Marion TPO, River to Sea TPO, and Space Coast TPO. Lake-Sumter MPO serves the central Florida counties of Lake and Sumter, with a combined population of 513,710<sup>3</sup> residents as of the 2020 United States Census. Covering a total area of approximately 1,509 square miles, the MPO oversees transportation planning and programming for a region that includes all or portions of three designated Urban Areas: Leesburg-Eustis-Tavares, Lady Lake-The Villages (shared with Ocala Marion TPO), and Orlando (shared with MetroPlan Orlando). Within their metropolitan planning area (MPA) are major roadways such as I-75, US-27, US-441, US-301, SR-44, SR-50, SR-19, and SR-91 (the Florida Turnpike); portions of CSX and Florida Central Railroad (FCEN) railway corridors; and regional trails including the Coast-to-Coast Trail, the Heart of Florida Loop, and the Wekiva Trail. The Lake-Sumter MPO planning area is served by two transit service providers: LakeXpress which provides fixed route and paratransit

---

<sup>3</sup> Despite having a total population exceeding 200,000, the Lake-Sumter MPO is not designated as a Transportation Management Area (TMA). This is because the portions of urbanized areas within Lake and Sumter counties each have populations less than 200,000, while some of the urbanized areas extend into neighboring counties, where the populations are larger. However, these larger populations in neighboring counties don’t count towards the Lake-Sumter MPO’s TMA qualification. Therefore, the combined population does not meet the threshold required for TMA designation.

services in Lake County, and Sumter County Transit which provides semi-fixed shuttle routes for transportation-disadvantaged individuals in Sumter County.

### The Lake-Sumter MPO 2023 LOPP Document

The 2023 Lake-Sumter LOPP document was adopted on June 21, 2023. It contains introductory background information about the purpose and role of both the MPO and the LOPP. It also includes a description of factors that influenced the development of the 2023 LOPP, recent changes in the LOPP development process (since 2021), the Lake-Sumter LOPP process timeline, and an overview of the LOPP structure (i.e., how to read the document). Key elements of note in the Lake-Sumter LOPP are as follows:

1. The LOPP contains 133 unique priority projects separated into the following ten project lists:
  - Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Project Priorities (6 projects)
  - Roadway Capacity (Non-SIS) Project Priorities (29 projects)
  - Safety/Operations/TSM&O Project Priorities (24 projects)
  - Complete Streets Project Priorities (9 projects)
  - Trail Project Priorities (17 projects)
  - Bicycle/Pedestrian & Sidewalk Project Priorities (14 projects)
  - Transit Project Priorities (8 projects)
  - Planning Study Priorities (14 projects)
  - Bridge Project Priorities (8 projects)
  - Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) Projects (4 projects).
2. The LOPP contains a “Top 20” table that identifies and ranks projects from each of the ten lists as the MPO’s highest priorities and signals to the district which projects the MPO believes should be included in the Work Program.
3. Each project listed in the LOPP includes the following information (Figure 30):
  - LOPP Rank (rank within each category and “Top 20” LOPP rank)
  - Project Sponsor/Location (e.g., FDOT/Lake County)
  - FDOT Project Numbers (FM/FPID/FPN), if applicable
  - Project Name
  - Road segment or corridor parameters (e.g., “from Oak Tree Dr. to State Road 46”)
  - Description of the Project (e.g., road widening, sidewalk repair, corridor study, etc.)
  - Project Type (e.g., capacity, safety, operations, bike/ped, planning, etc.)
  - Proposed Phase (e.g., construction, right-of-way, design, and planning)
  - Proposed Phase Fiscal Year
  - Proposed Phase Cost
  - Programmed Phase(s) of the Project (those already appearing in the currently adopted Work Program and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP))
  - Programmed Phase Fiscal Year (those already appearing in the currently adopted Work Program and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP))
  - Programmed Phase Cost (those already appearing in the currently adopted Work Program and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP))

4. The LOPP includes a table of priority projects from Lake-Sumter MPO’s 2022 LOPP which are now funded through construction—this is to reflect the project’s continued priority to the MPO through completion.
5. The LOPP includes tables for Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise and the Central Florida Expressway Authority priority projects for informational purposes only.

2023 Top 20 Rank	2022 Top 20 Rank	Sponsor/Location	FM#	Project Name	From	To	Description	LOPP Category	Proposed Phase	Proposed Phase FY	Proposed Phase Cost (Millions)	Programmed Phase	Programmed Phase FY	Programmed Phase Cost (millions)
1	1	FDOT/ Lake County	427056- 1	SR-50	CR 565 (Villa City)	CR 565A (Montavista)	Realignment	SIS and Limited Access	CST	24/25	\$45.5	ROW	23/24	\$14.7
2	3	FDOT	409870- 1	SR 44 (CR44B)	US 441	SR 44	Road Widening	Capacity (Non-SIS)	CST	24/25	\$26.5	ROW		
3	8	Sumter County	451322- 1	C 48	C 469	Lake/Sumter County Line	Safety Project	Safety/ Operations / TSM&O	CST	25/26	\$6.5	Design	23/24	\$1.6

**Figure 30. Excerpt from Lake-Sumter MPO’s 2023 LOPP Table 1—Top 20 Priorities (p. 10)**

### The Lake-Sumter MPO LOPP Development Process

*Communication and coordination with member governments:* Lake-Sumter MPO has an annual call for projects from late October to early January. The MPO accepts project applications from local agencies on an FDOT District 5 form called a PIA (Project Information Application). As a non-TMA MPO, Lake-Sumter MPO does not receive an annual allocation of federal suballocated funds (i.e. Surface Transportation Block Grant – Urban Attributable (SU), etc.), therefore their annual call for projects is for any type of project that might be funded using FDOT controlled funds. MPO staff review the PIAs and provide technical assistance to local project sponsors through February, then create their final draft of the LOPP by the end of March. As part of this process, MPO staff conduct intake meetings with project sponsors to collect and review project details, ensuring that all necessary information is gathered, and properly vetted before moving forward in the development or funding process.

*Communication and coordination with FDOT:* District 5 representatives indicated during their interview that their involvement with MPOs during the LOPP development process varies from MPO to MPO as they each have distinctive processes. For the Lake-Sumter MPO, the District 5 representative who works most closely with MPO staff during the LOPP development cycle is their MPO liaison. The MPO liaison monitors the LOPP process by attending all committee and board meetings and stays in close communication by using email and phone calls throughout the process. During the FDOT programming cycle, MPO staff also meet with the District Secretary, district planning staff, and Work Program staff.

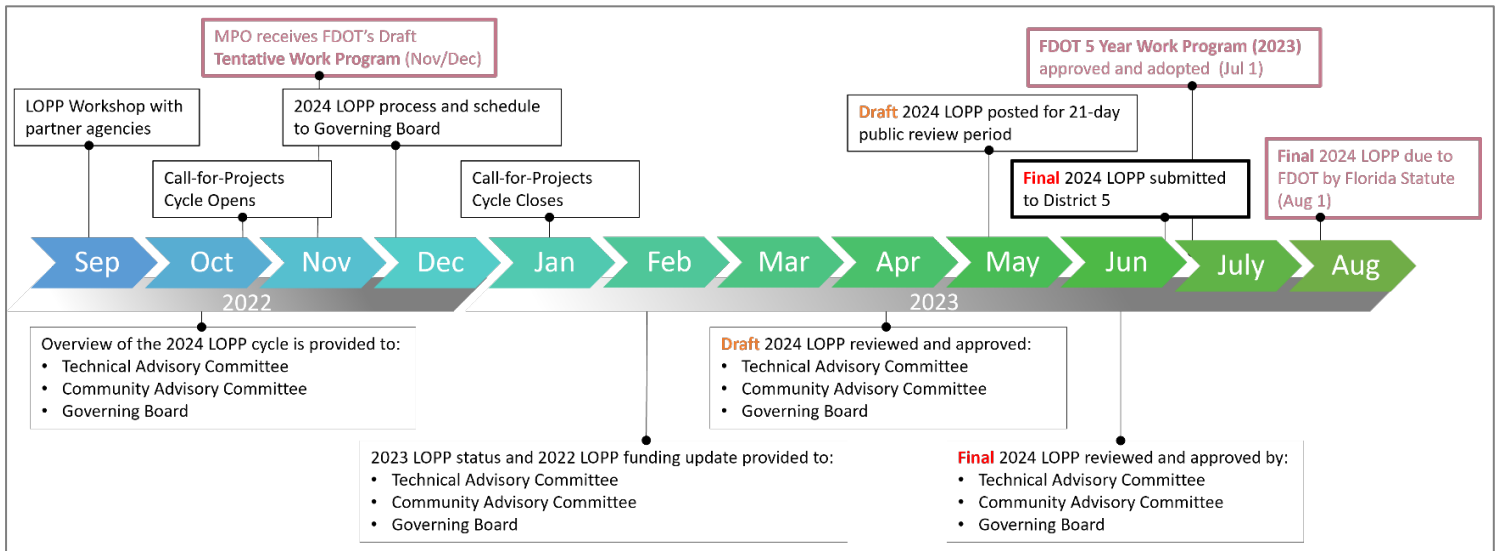
District Work Program staff meet with MPO staff prior to the intake meetings with project sponsors to help in vetting PIAs and gathering supporting information. According to the Lake-Sumter MPO Director, this is a very labor-intensive process that involves hundreds of emails back and forth. Another mode of



coordination between District 5 and the Lake-Sumter MPO is the Grant Application Process (GAP) system.<sup>4</sup> In addition to including priority projects in their LOPP, MPO staff in District 5 are required to input information received through PIAs into FDOT’s online GAP system.

*Communication and coordination with committees and board members:* Prior to accepting new PIAs or resubmitting previous PIAs for prioritization, MPO staff discuss the LOPP process and schedule at meetings with committee and MPO Governing Board members. A description of the LOPP process and a schedule of important dates is posted on the publicly accessible MPO website. The LOPP is a major topic annually at the November, December, February, April, and June committee and board meetings. The committees and board are presented with the draft LOPP during their respective April meetings and the final LOPP is reviewed and approved at their respective June meetings (Figure 31).

*Communication and coordination with the public:* The draft LOPP is posted on the MPO website at the beginning of April, and it remains online through June. Once the final LOPP has been developed, it is made publicly available on the MPO website. The public has a 21-day comment period before the final LOPP is approved by the MPO Governing Board and ultimately submitted to FDOT for use in building the Tentative Work Program.



**Figure 31. Lake-Sumter MPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle**

## Broward MPO (FDOT District 4)

### Background

Broward MPO is one of five MPOs in FDOT District 4—the others being Indian River County MPO, Martin MPO, Palm Beach TPA, and St. Lucie TPO. Broward MPO serves Broward County, with a

<sup>4</sup> The Grant Application Process (GAP) is the FDOT’s web-based database application for soliciting and receiving applications for grant funded projects and project management of the grants after award. It replaced the Local Agency Information Tool (LAPIT) in January 2021.

population of 1,944,375 residents as of the 2020 United States Census. Covering a total area of approximately 1,203 square miles, the MPO oversees transportation planning and programming for a region that includes a portion of one designated Urban Area: Miami-Fort Lauderdale (shared with Palm Beach TPA, Martin MPO, and Miami-Dade TPO). Within their planning region are major roadways such as I-75, I-95, I-595, US-1, US-441, US-27, Florida’s Turnpike, and the Sawgrass Expressway; portions of the South Florida Rail Corridor (SFRC) and the Florida East Coast (FEC) railway corridor; Port Everglades; and the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport. Broward County Transit provides local fixed-route bus service, community shuttles, and express bus service for the Broward MPO planning area. Tri-Rail provides commuter rail service within and between the Broward MPO, Miami-Dade TPO, and Palm Beach TPA planning areas. Additionally, intercity high-speed rail service between Southeast and Central Florida is provided by Brightline, including a station in Ft. Lauderdale.

### The Broward MPO 2023 LOPP Document

The Broward MPO LOPP<sup>5</sup> document, approved June 8, 2023, contains an overview of the purpose and role of the LOPP in relation to the MPO’s Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP),<sup>6</sup> the Transportation Improvement Program, and FDOT’s Tentative Work Program. The introductory section also contains information about fund sources and allocations, an explanation of how to read the LOPP, and an explanation of the project prioritization process for each project category within the LOPP. Key elements of note in the Broward LOPP are as follows:

1. The LOPP contains 111 unique priority projects separated into the following 7 project lists:
  - Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (1 project)
  - Complete Streets and other Localized Incentives Program (CSLIP) (22 projects)
  - Complete Streets Master Plan (CSMP) (25 projects)
  - Mobility Hubs (1 project)
  - Roadway (50 projects)
  - Systems Management/Safety (8 projects)
  - Transit (4 projects)
  
2. Each project listed in the LOPP includes the following information (Figure 32 and Figure 33):
  - Rank within a project’s category—there is no indicator of overall rank within the LOPP.
  - Project Name
  - Project Limit (e.g., “from Old Club Road to Loxahatchee Road”)
  - Type of Work (e.g., bike lane/sidewalk, traffic calming, feasibility study, etc.)
  - Proposed Study (e.g., PD&E, feasibility, resiliency, etc.)
  - Project City
  - Project Ownership (e.g., local, county, state, etc.)

---

<sup>5</sup> Broward MPO calls their LOPP document a “Multimodal Priority List (MMPL)”—for ease of comparison it will be called an LOPP in this report.

<sup>6</sup> The terms “Long-Range Transportation Plan” and “Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” are interchangeable. Although Broward MPO uses the term MTP, for ease of comparison it will be called an LRTP in this report.

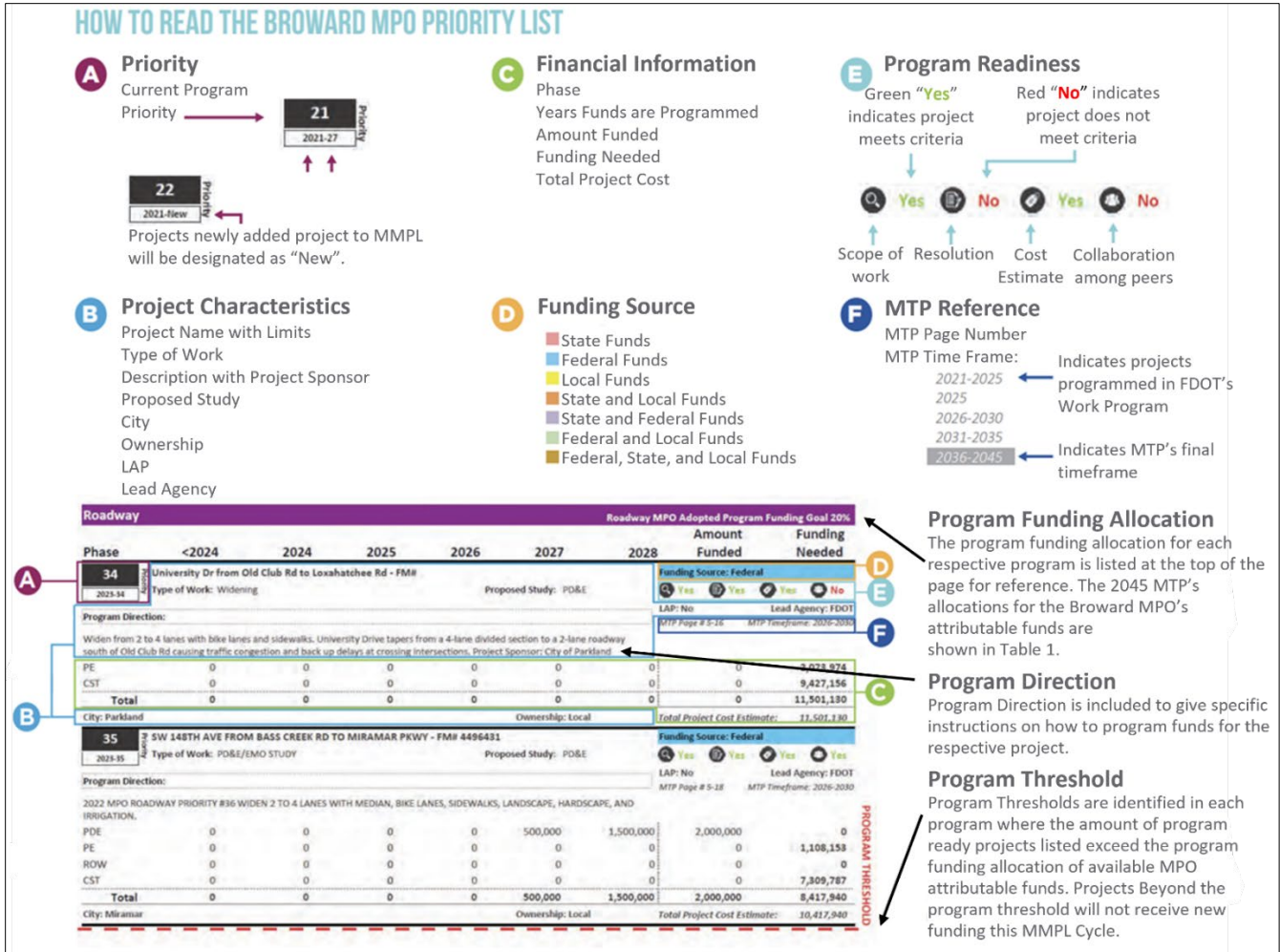
- Lead Agency (e.g., FDOT, City of Miramar, etc.)
  - Local Agency Program (LAP) (yes or no)
  - Proposed Funding Source (e.g., State, Federal, Local, or some mixture thereof)
  - Financial Information (phase, year funds are programmed, amount funded, funding needed, total project costs)
  - Reference to the project in the LRTP and timeframe (if applicable) in the LRTP
  - Program Direction— Broward MPO employs a unique approach within their LOPP they call "Program Direction." This section provides specific instructions to Work Program staff regarding MPO-preferred fund allocation for individual projects.
3. Program Readiness Criteria Indicators (scope of work, resolution, cost estimate, collaboration among partners)
  4. All project categories (except UPWP) show the current allocations for the Broward MPO's urban attributable funds. The Broward MPO Cost Feasible Plan, which is part of the LRTP and approved by the MPO Governing Board, includes six funding programs that account for the region's multimodal transportation needs. To ensure consistency with the LRTP and Cost Feasible Plan, the LOPP follows the same allocation of urban attributable funds:
    - Complete Streets and other Localized Initiatives Program (CSLIP) 20%
    - Complete Streets Master Plan (CSMP) 25%
    - Mobility Hubs 10%
    - Roadway 20%
    - Systems Management/Safety 15%
    - Transit 10%

These program allocations are shown in each table and correspond to the "program threshold" line described in the next bullet.

5. All project categories (except UPWP) have a red dashed "program threshold" line which indicates the point beyond which projects listed exceed the MPO adopted funding goals. Projects below this threshold should not be programmed in the upcoming LOPP cycle without direct communication with the MPO.
6. The LOPP includes a table of Florida's Turnpike Enterprise planned and unfunded needs projects for informational purposes only.

CSLIP							CSLIP MPO Adopted Program Funding Goal 20%		
Phase	<2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Amount Funded	Funding Needed	
<b>01</b>	CITY OF WESTON VARIOUS LOCATIONS - FM# 4482881						Funding Source: FEDERAL		
2023-01	Type of Work: SIDEWALK		Proposed Study: N/A			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes			
Program Direction:							LAP: Yes	Lead Agency: Weston	
2022 MPO CYCLE 4 PRIORITY #19; LAP W/ CITY OF WESTON INDIAN TRACE FROM TOWN CENTER BLVD TO BONAVENTURE BLVD; ROYAL PALM BLV. FROM WESTON HILLS DR TO TOWN CENTER BLVD; WESTON RD. FROM INDIAN TRACE TO ROYAL PALM BLVD; SOUTH POST RD. FROM BONAVENTURE BLVD TO WEST OF ENTERPRISE AVE							MTP Page # 5-30	MTP Timeframe: N/A	
PE	0	0	0	790,381	0	0	790,381	0	
CST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,968,855	
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>790,381</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>790,381</b>	<b>3,968,855</b>	
City: Weston			Ownership: Local			Total Project Cost Estimate: 4,759,236			
<b>02</b>	HONEY HILL DR FROM FLAMINGO RD TO SW 55 ST - FM# 4482901						Funding Source: FEDERAL		
2023-03	Type of Work: BIKE PATH/TRAIL		Proposed Study: N/A			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes			
Program Direction:							LAP: Yes	Lead Agency: Miramar	
2022 MPO CYCLE 4 PRIORITY #21; LAP W/ CITY OF MIRAMAR CONSTRUCTION OF 8FT SHARED USE PATH, PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING							MTP Page # 5-30	MTP Timeframe: N/A	
PE	0	0	0	312,322	0	0	312,322	0	
CST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	878,454	
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>312,322</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>312,322</b>	<b>878,454</b>	
City: Miramar			Ownership: Local			Total Project Cost Estimate: 1,190,776			

Figure 32. Excerpt of Broward MOP's 2023 LOPP - CSLIP (p. 12)



**Figure 33. Broward MPO's 2023 LOPP—How to Read the Broward MPO Priority List (p. 4)**

### The Broward MPO LOPP Development Process

*Communication and coordination with member governments:* Broward MPO has two different types of calls for projects. The bulk of the projects that make their way onto the LOPP are from a call for projects conducted every five years as part of the MPO's L RTP development process. The second type of call for projects is for projects that can be funded as part of the Complete Streets and Localized Initiatives Program (CSLIP) list within the LOPP. Projects that fall under CSLIP are smaller-scale projects that do not require right-of-way and are almost entirely funded using the MPO's suballocated Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds. Projects that are part of the long-range plan or larger-scale projects that require more coordination come almost exclusively from the five-year call for projects from the L RTP development cycle. If a need arises in which a new project that is not already part of the L RTP must be added to the LOPP, the MPO handles that through their L RTP amendment process.

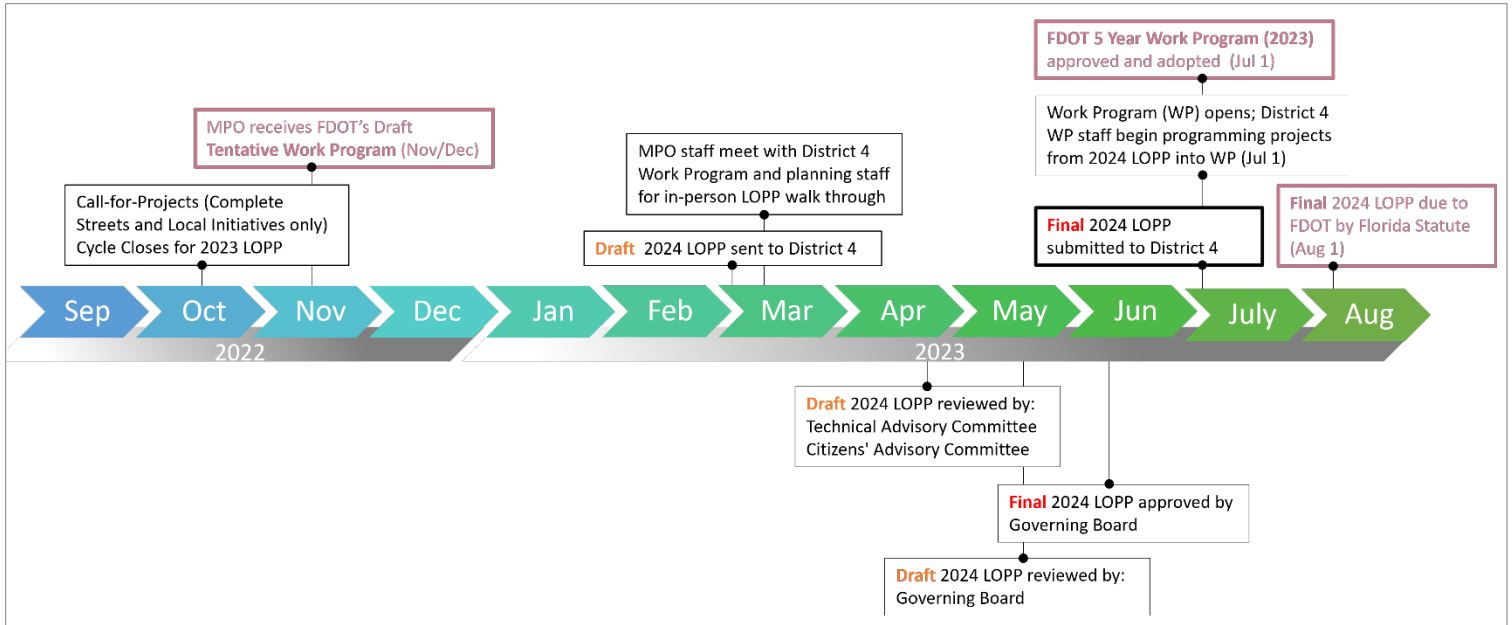
*Communication and coordination with FDOT:* The FDOT District 4 representative indicated during their interview that they tailor their involvement with each MPO in the district differently at the request of

the individual MPOs. The District 4 MPO Liaison meets with Broward MPO staff weekly and the LOPP is the main topic of these meetings. Additionally, the District 4 Transportation Planning Manager and the MPO Liaison attend each of the MPO's committee and Governing Board meetings. MPO planning staff view the MPO Liaison from District 4 as a "vital link" for translating the LOPP to district Work Program staff during the development of the Draft Tentative Work Program. When the Work Program opens on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the responsibility of communicating the nuances of each project on the LOPP to Work Program staff falls almost entirely to the MPO Liaison and the District Transportation Planning Manager.

MPO staff indicated that they occasionally communicate directly with DOT Work Program staff, but to a much lesser extent than with the MPO Liaison. For instance, after the final LOPP has been submitted to District 4 and Work Program staff have completed the process of building the Draft Tentative Work Program, a Work Program representative contacts MPO planning staff to provide advance notice and explanations of why projects did or did not make it into the Draft Tentative Work Program.

*Communication and coordination with committees and board members:* The draft LOPP is presented to the Technical Advisory Committee and Citizens' Advisory Committee in April and the Broward MPO Governing Board in May. In June, the Governing Board is presented with the final LOPP for their approval. The Draft Tentative Work Program is released in November of the following year. MPO staff quickly review the Draft Tentative Work Program, determine if there are any issues that need to be addressed with District 4, and present the Draft Tentative Work Program to the Governing Board for approval (Figure 34).

*Communication and coordination with the public:* Specifically, regarding the Complete Streets and Localized Initiatives Program (CSLIP) list within the LOPP, Broward MPO provides information on its website about what the program is, what it funds, and which CSLIP projects are in the most current draft LOPP. MPO staff posts the dates that the Technical Advisory Committee and Governing Board will meet to approve the draft LOPP on the MPO website. These posts typically include the agenda and minutes for past committee and board meetings. The public can attend committee and board meetings virtually and watch archived meetings.



**Figure 34. Broward MPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle**

## North Florida TPO (FDOT District 2)

### Background

North Florida TPO is one of two MPOs in District 2—the other being Gainesville MTPO. North Florida TPO serves four counties—Duval County, Clay County, Nassau County, and St. Johns County—with a combined population of 1,577,589 residents as of the 2020 United States Census. Covering a total area of approximately 2,617 square miles, the MPO oversees transportation planning and programming for a region that includes three designated Urban Areas: Jacksonville, Fernandina Beach-Yulee, and St. Augustine. Within their planning region are major roadways such as I-95, I-295, I-10, US-1, US-17, US-90, and US-301; portions of CSX, Norfolk Southern, and the Florida East Coast (FEC) railway corridor; the Jacksonville Port Authority (Jaxport) and the Port of Fernandina; and the Jacksonville International Airport (JIA). The Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) is responsible for public transit in the Jacksonville region with local bus service, Express Bus service, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), paratransit service, and the Jacksonville Skyway. The St. Johns County Sunshine Bus Company provides a fixed-route system that operates within the St. Augustine Urbanized Area, and a paratransit service available to those qualified as transportation disadvantaged.

### The North Florida TPO 2023 LOPP Document

The North Florida TPO LOPP document, approved April 13, 2023, contains overview information on the purpose and role of the LOPP in relation to the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), LRTP, and the FDOT Tentative Work Program as well as a brief description of the North Florida TPO LOPP process. Key elements of note in the North Florida TPO LOPP are as follows:

1. The LOPP contains 93 unique priority projects separated into the following 10 project lists:

- Region-Wide Priority Projects (20 projects)
  - Aviation Priority Projects — Jacksonville Airport (2 projects)
  - Mass Transit Priorities—Jacksonville Transportation Authority (12 projects)
  - Mass Transit Priorities—St. Johns County/Sunshine Bus (13 projects)
  - Port Priorities—JAXPORT (9 projects)
  - Port Priorities—Port of Fernandina (3 projects)
  - Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Projects: Multi-Use Trails (4 projects)
  - Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Projects: School Safety Sidewalks (3 projects)
  - SUN Trails Priorities (5 projects)
  - Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Project Priorities (22 projects)
2. Projects listed under Region-Wide Priority Projects, TAP Projects, and TRIP Project Priorities include the following information (Figure 35):
    - Rank within a project’s category—there is no indicator of overall rank within the LOPP.
    - Project Name
    - Project Limit (e.g., “from Henley Road to Knight Boxx Road”)
    - Current Project Status (e.g., construction, planning, etc.)
  3. Projects listed under both Mass Transit Priorities include the following information:
    - Rank within the project category
    - Project Name
    - Project Description
    - Justification for the project
  4. Projects listed under SUN Trails Priorities include the following information:
    - Project Name
    - Project Limits
    - Estimated cost of the project (if available)
  5. Projects listed under Aviation Priority Projects—Jacksonville Airport only include the project name and a cost estimate.
  6. Projects listed under both Port Priorities include only a project description.
  7. The LOPP includes tables for priority projects funded in the current 5-year work program to reflect the project’s continued priority to the TPO through completion. This includes 17 funded Region-Wide Priority Projects, 6 funded TAP Multi-use Trails projects, and 2 funded TAP School Safety Sidewalks projects in the adopted 2023 LOPP.



2023 REGION-WIDE PRIORITY PROJECTS				
Rank	Project	Limits	Description	Status
<b>UNFUNDED PRIORITIES</b>				
1	<b>SR 228 Normandy Blvd</b> <i>Duval County</i>	Equestrian Center to US 301	Widen to 4-lanes with bike lanes and sidewalks <b>*Moderate Vulnerability</b>	
2	<b>CR 220</b> <i>Clay County</i>	SR 21 to Henley Rd	Widen to 4-lanes <b>High Crash Intersection (CR220 &amp; Henley Rd)</b>	
3	<b>SR 200/SR A1A</b> <i>Nassau County</i>	I-95 to Amelia Island Pkwy	Intersection improvements <b>High Crash Corridor</b> <b>*Moderate-High Vulnerability</b>	
4	<b>SR 16</b> <i>St. Johns County</i>	International Golf Pkwy to Outlet Mall Entrance	Widen to 4 lanes	PE in 24

**Figure 35. Excerpt from North Florida TPO's 2023 LOPP—Region-Wide Priority Projects (p. 7)**

### The North Florida TPO LOPP Development Process

*Communication and coordination with member governments:* The first table in the North Florida TPO’s LOPP is the Region-Wide Priority Projects list. This list is made up of projects submitted by each of the four counties within the TPO’s boundary. Each county (Duval, St. Johns, Clay, and Nassau) produces their own ranked project priority list of 20-30 projects and submits their list to the TPO between November and February each year. TPO and FDOT District 2 planning staff each work with the four counties during this time to understand the nature and scope of the projects being prioritized and to help vet projects to ensure those submitted for inclusion in the LOPP have a high likelihood of being carried out to completion. Although there is no set rule regarding the number of projects from each county the TPO will place in the top 20 Region-Wide Priority Projects list each year, generally, Duval County represents 7, St. Johns and Clay County each represent 5, and Nassau represents 3. The onus is on the individual counties to prioritize their lists and TPO staff maintain the counties’ project rankings when blending the lists into one top 20 list.

*Communication and coordination with FDOT:* Formal meetings take place between North Florida TPO and District 2 planning staff at various phases of the LOPP development process—about 2-3 times per year. More importantly, TPO and the District 2 planning staff are in constant and close communication regarding the development of the LOPP—phone calls occur between staff from these two agencies multiple times a week and often multiple times per day, year-round.

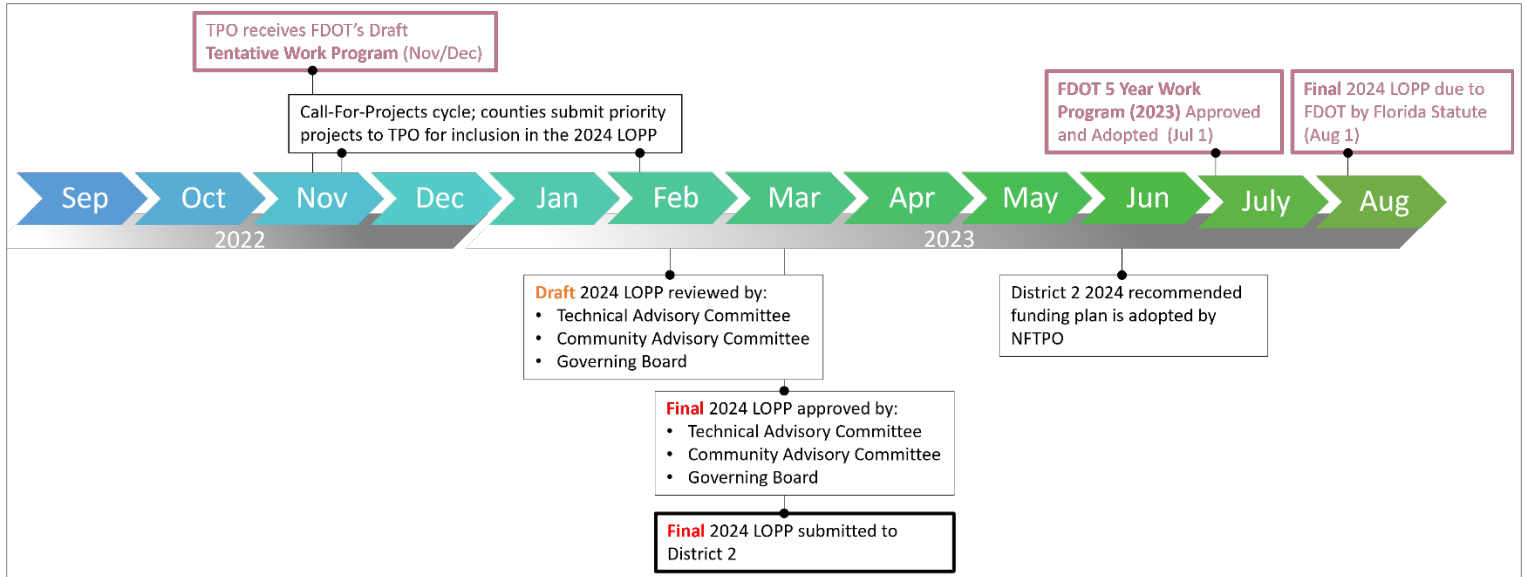
Most communication between TPO and District 2 staff regarding LOPP development is focused on the Region-Wide Priority Projects list. Lists in the North Florida TPO LOPP have been coordinated between District 2 and the TPO in the following manner:

- District 2 assigns district-controlled funds (federal and state) primarily toward major maintenance projects (e.g., signal repairs). As a result, the TPO only considers Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant – Urban Attributable (SU) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds when developing the Region-Wide Priority Projects list.
- Projects in the Region-Wide Priority Projects list are eligible for all funding sources, but it is understood that funding for these projects will primarily be SU. This is the “main list” that the counties, TPO, and District 2 staff work on together during LOPP development.
- Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) programming is a separate process in which District 2 develops a priority list to submit to FDOT Central Office to compete against priorities from other districts. District 2 determines SIS priorities each year and asks the North Florida TPO if they object to the rankings. The SIS list in the LOPP reflects this process and matches District 2 priorities.
- Projects on other lists are intended to be funded using specific funds. This sends the message to District 2 to fund these projects only if that type of funding is available.

The TPO submits its final LOPP in March. District 2 planning staff use the LOPP to develop a funding plan matrix which is used by district Work Program staff to program projects into the Draft Tentative Work Program. The TPO is also sent the matrix in June and the funding plan is adopted by the North Florida TPO Board. The Tentative Work Program is completed in November and a presentation is made to the TPO Board. However, the TPO staff know months in advance what will be programmed in the Tentative Work Program because they are in constant contact with District 2 staff and because the Tentative Work Program generally mirrors what is in the funding plan matrix.

*Communication and coordination with committees and board members:* TPO staff present the draft LOPP to the Governing Board, Technical Advisory Committee, and Community Advisory Committee in February. In March, the Governing Board, Technical Advisory Committee, and Community Advisory Committee approve the LOPP as final and send it to District 2. In June, the funding plan matrix is presented to the Governing Board. The funding plan matrix is a spreadsheet that shows what has been funded for the five previous years of the Work Program and what is included in the five years covered by the currently adopted Work Program (current fiscal year plus the next four fiscal years). With the funding plan matrix, the TPO and district staff provide a level of transparency to the Governing Board about how SU and TAP funds are distributed among the four counties on a long-term basis. This level of communication has established a high degree of trust that each county will receive its fair share over a five- or ten-year window, even if the current year does not reflect that distribution (Figure 36).

*Communication and coordination with the public:* Because the decision by which projects make it into the Region-Wide Priority Projects list of the LOPP is largely placed on the four counties using their own prioritization process, most public engagement regarding which projects will appear in the LOPP happens at the county level at their respective county commission meetings. Additionally, the TPO posts the draft LOPP on their website and the public is encouraged to attend TPO meetings.



**Figure 36. North Florida TPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle**

## Pasco County MPO (FDOT District 7)

### Background

Pasco County MPO is one of four MPOs in District 7—the others being Forward Pinellas, Hernando/Citrus MPO, and Hillsborough TPO. Pasco County MPO serves Pasco County with a population of 561,891 residents as of the 2020 United States Census. Covering a total area of approximately 747 square miles, the MPO oversees transportation planning and programming for a region that includes all or portions of three designated Urban Areas: Tampa-St. Petersburg (shared with Hillsborough TPO and Forward Pinellas), Zephyrhills, and Springhill (shared with Hernando/Citrus MPO). Within their planning region are major roadways such as I-75, US-19, US-301, US-98, SR-54, and SR-589; and a portion of the CSX railway corridor. Pasco County Public Transportation (GoPasco) is responsible for public transit in the region with local fixed-route bus service and paratransit service within Pasco County.

### The Pasco County MPO 2023 LOPP Document

The Pasco County MPO LOPP document, approved June 8, 2023, contains the MPO’s priority projects without any of the extra background material the other case example MPOs include in their LOPPs.<sup>7</sup> Key elements of note in the Pasco County LOPP are as follows:

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that most MPOs (17 of 27) produce LOPPs which simply contain tables of projects with varying degrees of detail and information within each table. Pasco County MPO’s selection as a case example is due, in part, to the brevity, conciseness, and format similarity to the majority of MPO LOPPs. The other ten MPOs provide additional information in their LOPP (e.g., background information, the purpose and role of the LOPP, an LOPP process timeline, an overview of the LOPP structure, etc.) for which North Florida TPO, Lake-Sumter MPO, and Broward MPO are excellent examples.

1. The LOPP contains 36 unique priority projects separated into the following 2 project lists:
  - Multimodal Transportation List of Project Priorities (33 projects)
  - Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Project Priorities (3 projects)
2. The LOPP includes tables for priority projects programmed in the current 5-year work program to reflect the project’s continued priority to the MPO through completion. This includes 20 programmed (funded through construction) projects from the Multimodal Transportation List and 9 programmed (funded through construction) projects from the TAP list.
3. Projects listed under the Multimodal Transportation list include the following information (Figure 37):
  - Rank within the project’s category—there is no indicator of overall rank between the two lists.
  - FDOT Project Numbers (FM/FPID/FPN)
  - Responsible Agency (e.g., FDOT, Pasco County, City of New Port Richey, etc.)
  - Project Name (e.g., SR 52, Orange Belt Trail, etc.)
  - Road segment or corridor parameters (e.g., “from Suncoast Parkway to US 41”)
  - Project Description (e.g., new interchange, multi-use path, new roadway, etc.)
  - Funded Phase (e.g., right-of-way, construction, design, etc.)
  - Funded Year
  - Request (e.g., right-of-way, construction, design, etc.)
  - Current Project Status (e.g., construction underway, route study in progress, etc.)
4. Projects listed under the TAP list include the following information:
  - Rank within the project’s category—there is no indicator of overall rank between the two lists.
  - FDOT Project Numbers (FM/FPID/FPN)
  - Project Name (e.g., SR 52, Orange Belt Trail, etc.)
  - Road segment or corridor parameters (e.g., “from Suncoast Parkway to US 41”)
  - Current Status (e.g., construction underway, route study in progress, etc.)

2023 Priority	FPN	Responsible Agency	Project	From	To	Description	Funded Phase	Funded Year	Request	Status
1	419182-2	FDOT	US 41/SR 54	W of Wilso Road / SR 54	E of Osprey Ln / SR 54	New interchange	ROW	FY 25	CST	
2	N/A	Pasco County	Orange Belt Trail – All other Segments	Route Study Underway	Route Study Underway	Multi-use path	Route Study		PD&E/ROW/PE/CST	Route Study in progress
3	439416-1	County/ City of New Port Richey	Marine Pkwy @ US 19 Pedestrian Overpass	W of US 19	E of US 19	Pedestrian Overpass	ROW/ENV		PD&E	ROW/ENV funded FY 24-28 TIP

**Figure 37. Excerpt from Pasco County MPO’s 2023 LOPP—Multimodal Transportation LOPP (p. 2)**

## The Pasco County MPO LOPP Development Process

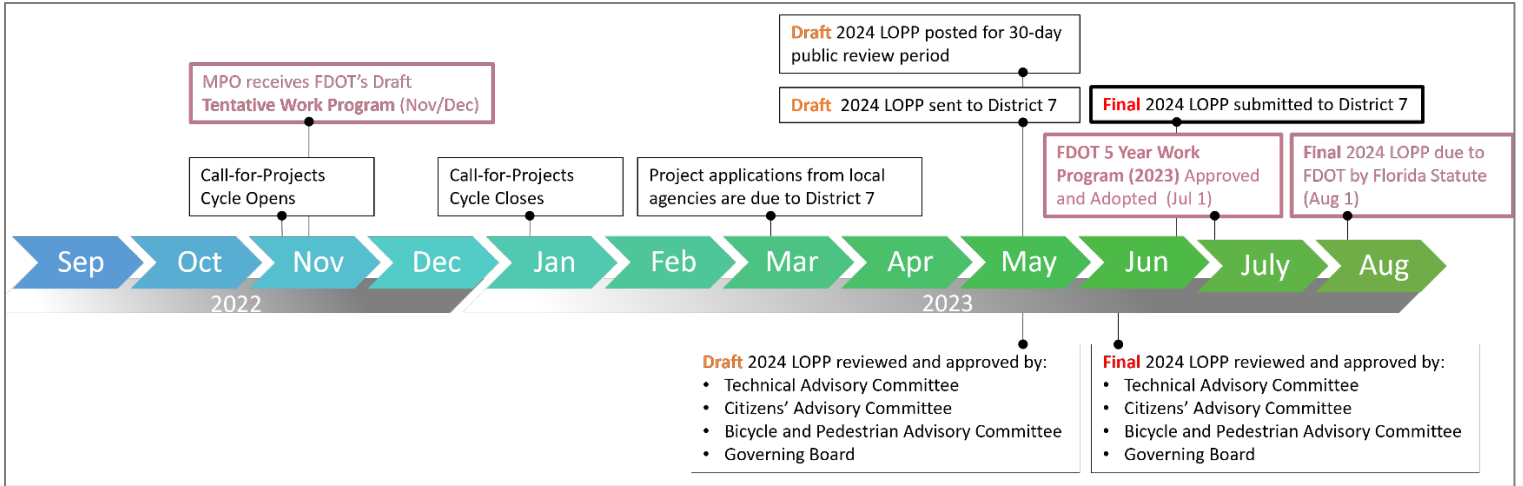
*Communication and coordination with member governments:* Pasco County MPO conducted its first call for projects in 2023. The call for projects was announced through a notice posted on the Pasco County MPO website as well as through an email push sent to county and municipal staff. The call was general in nature—not directed toward a certain type of project or funding source. As part of the call for projects packet, county and municipal staff received an application, guidance on how to fill out the application, and scoring sheets so they can self-score their projects. Since many of the municipalities are small and have minimal staff, the MPO aids them in completing the application.

*Communication and coordination with FDOT:* The FDOT District 7 representatives indicated during their interview that their involvement with each MPO in the district varies since each MPO has different methodologies for developing their LOPPs. Throughout the development of the LOPP, Pasco County MPO planning staff has an open line of communication (phone calls and emails) with District 7 planning staff, particularly the MPO Liaison. Two formal meetings regarding the LOPP take place between Pasco County MPO staff and District 7 planning staff—one occurs in late summer and the other in early fall. Additionally, monthly coordination calls between District 7 and Pasco County MPO staff occur in which project priorities are often discussed. District 7 planning staff also attend MPO committee meetings and MPO Governing Board meetings where LOPP development is a consistent topic of discussion. District 7 Work Program staff attend the two monthly MPO/district coordination meetings where programming decisions are being made as part of Tentative Work Program development, prior to the distribution of the Tentative Work Program in November.

Another mode of coordination between District 7 and Pasco County MPO is the Grant Application Process (GAP) system. In addition to including priority projects in their LOPP, Pasco County MPO planning staff upload information they receive through their project application process into the GAP system. In District 7, projects that anticipate SU, TAP, and TRIP funds are expected to be uploaded into the GAP system, and in Pasco County it is the MPO's responsibility to do so.

*Communication and coordination with committees and board members:* Pasco County MPO committee and Governing Board meetings occur monthly and LOPP development is a regular topic of discussion. In May, MPO staff present the draft LOPP to their Governing Board, Technical Advisory Committee, Citizens' Advisory Committee, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. In June, the committees and board are presented with the final LOPP for their approval. The following November, MPO and District 7 staff meet with the Governing Board to discuss how the LOPP was translated into the Tentative Draft Work Program (Figure 38).

*Communication and coordination with the public:* Once the draft LOPP is presented to the MPO committees and the Governing Board in May, the public has a 30-day window to comment on the draft LOPP before the adoption of the Final LOPP in June. Public notice is made on the Pasco County/MPO Website and Social Media Platforms and the public is encouraged to attend board and committee meetings. A portion of the agenda at each committee meeting is reserved for the public to provide comments.



**Figure 38. Pasco County MPO 2023 LOPP Development Cycle**

## Chapter 6: Observations and Noteworthy Practices

In this chapter, insights from the literature review, survey results, and case examples are combined to discern patterns, shared methodologies, and significant noteworthy practices. The literature review made it clear that transportation project prioritization of MPOs involves complex, multi-layered processes that vary widely among different regions, states, districts, and metropolitan areas, requiring both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure effective planning and programming that meet federal and state requirements. The survey results emphasized the importance of effective communication, coordination, and advocacy in successfully developing and implementing LOPPs. It also identified possible areas for improvement, such as simplifying funding processes, aligning priorities more effectively, and enhancing public engagement practices. The case studies illustrated the adaptability and effectiveness of diverse coordination strategies across different contexts, highlighting that building strong relationships, maintaining clarity and flexibility in documentation, and managing turnover proactively are key to successful LOPP development. These combined findings contributed to the development of nine overarching themes:

**Each MPO and district possesses its own distinctive characteristics, which inevitably shape the collaborative methodologies they cultivate.**

---

*“We treat all our MPOs differently at their request. Some of our MPOs say we want to meet weekly, so we meet with them weekly. Others say let's just do it monthly. That is their request, so we don't really push them one way or another—we want the meetings to be valuable to them. We get value out of it as well, but it's really their meeting and they can talk to us about whatever issues are on their mind, whether it's LOPP or something else.” —FDOT District Representative*

---

Federal rules provide the underlying foundations of an MPO, guiding its structure and operations. However, despite these common regulations, MPOs adapt and evolve to address local needs. Variations in staffing size, funding availability, and the diverse needs of member agencies emphasize the necessity for each MPO and district to adopt a distinct collaborative process tailored to their particular context. The survey responses demonstrated the unique methodologies each MPO cultivates to collaborate with their respective districts, highlighting the distinct characteristics that shape these approaches. Likewise, during the interview process, each of the FDOT representatives from the four case example districts recognized the diversity among the MPOs in their district and mentioned that they tailor their collaborative processes to match the needs of the individual MPOs.

For instance, District 4's administrative boundary contains Broward MPO, Indian River County MPO, Martin MPO, Palm Beach TPA, and St. Lucie TPO. When establishing a meeting schedule for each of the MPOs, the District 4 representative stated that they wanted to make sure they set up a meeting schedule that was valuable and useful to the individual MPOs. As of 2024, they meet weekly with Broward MPO and Palm Beach TPA, monthly with Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO, and on-demand with

Indian River County MPO (Indian River County MPO staff prefers to meet with District 4 staff after their Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings which occur about once every other month).

Also, each of the seven districts is quite different in their physical characteristics, needs, and constraints. District 2,<sup>8</sup> characterized by lower population density and vast rural areas, emphasizes the expansion and maintenance of road networks. Recognizing the necessity for connectivity in less densely populated regions, transportation planning in District 2 focuses on building new roads and sustaining a widely dispersed roadway network to facilitate mobility across rural landscapes. Within District 2, North Florida TPO has large unincorporated areas and four counties that have the resources and staff to undertake much of the groundwork of LOPP development. While North Florida TPO's collaborative approach involves close communication between the district, counties, and the MPO, it relies heavily on county-level resources. Therefore, the MPO's role in LOPP development may require lower staff and resource demands.

Conversely, District 4,<sup>9</sup> encompassing populous areas like Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale, prioritizes infill development, systems operations, and optimizing existing infrastructure to accommodate high population density and urban growth. With a robustly built-out urban landscape, efficient utilization of transportation systems is often a focus of District 4's MPOs. Unlike North Florida TPO, Broward MPO covers 31 municipalities and very little unincorporated area. Compared to counties that typically have more resources, cities often lack the capacity to engage heavily in the LOPP development process. Broward MPO's collaborative approach, therefore, requires higher staff and resource demands from both the MPO and the district.

The bottom line is that local context matters. The approach to project prioritization and funding allocation, and therefore LOPP development, is influenced by local contexts, including county demographics, administrative structures, development patterns, transportation networks, and the availability of resources.

## **Successful LOPP development involves building strong cross-agency relationships through open communication and mutual respect.**

---

*“On a project basis, we cram a lot into our LOPP, but the LOPP only tells you 20% of the story on the project. Sometimes there are political issues in the background that we need to make sure get translated to district Work Program staff. We need to make sure that there are other small funding nuances that get translated, and the MPO liaisons are really responsible for that.” —MPO Representative*

---

---

<sup>8</sup> As of the 2020 U.S. Census, District 2 has a population of 2,254,791 within 11,800 mi<sup>2</sup> and a population density of 191 people per mi<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> As of the 2020 U.S. Census, District 4 has a population of 4,084,011 within 4,785 mi<sup>2</sup> and a population density of 853 people per mi<sup>2</sup>.



The survey results and case example interviews emphasized the significance of fostering strong relationships between MPO and district staff through open communication, understanding each other's perspectives, and building trust over time. MPO and district representatives described the use of various communication methods, such as meetings, emails, phone calls, workshops, and formal presentations, to ensure a collaborative approach to project prioritization. This communication continues during the development of the Tentative Work Program, helping ensure that projects identified in the LOPP are accurately represented.

Responses from the survey and interviews reiterated that continuous communication between MPO and district staff was seen as essential for effective collaboration. Regular meetings, informal phone calls, and continual updates and discussions throughout the LOPP development cycle were perceived as helpful in understanding project priorities, addressing concerns, and curbing potential frustrations.

Many of the people interviewed as part of this project described their role as intermediaries or bridges between different entities, advocating for their respective organization's priorities while also negotiating compromises and finding creative solutions to funding or project challenges. Key elements to building these strong cross-agency relationships were understanding each other's role in the process, building trust through transparent communication and mutual respect, and acknowledging the unique circumstances and priorities of the different entities involved. Key takeaways on this topic from the interviews and survey results are:

- **Trust:** MPO and district staff that have established trust with their cross-agency counterparts felt they had greater flexibility when searching for creative solutions to move projects forward.
- **Advocacy:** District liaisons can play an important role in advocating for MPO priorities with district Work Program staff and fostering trust between the two entities. The LOPP only provides a partial understanding of each project, the liaisons help to ensure that all nuances, including political issues and funding considerations, are effectively communicated.
- **Stability in project prioritization:** Moving project priorities significantly on the LOPP or removing them before completion can impact programming and funding decisions. Efforts to provide stability to the LOPP from year to year are seen by both MPO and district staff as a method of building trust between the two agencies.
- **Continuous communication:** Many of the MPO and district interviewees felt that continuous communication between MPO and district staff has been essential for effective collaboration. Regular meetings, informal phone calls, and continual updates and discussions throughout the LOPP development cycle help in understanding project priorities, addressing concerns, and curbing potential frustrations. Nearly all interviewees mentioned that communication between the MPO and district staff was more important than the layout of the LOPP.
- **Mutual benefit:** MPO and district staff recognized the mutual benefit of cooperation. By working together, they could address project funding challenges, expedite project delivery, and achieve better outcomes for transportation projects than by working alone.
- **Resolving misunderstandings:** When misunderstandings or confusions arise about MPO priorities, districts typically engage in further discussions to resolve the issues. If timing allows, adjustments are made within the current cycle; otherwise, corrections are noted for future cycles or additional funding opportunities.

Several districts have established detailed schedules and processes for integrating MPO priorities into the Tentative Work Program. This includes gathering priority lists, vetting projects, and holding multiple rounds of meetings to discuss and refine project selections. The survey also indicated that there have been instances of miscommunication and confusion over MPO priorities in the past, but regular coordination and continuous dialogue were critical for ensuring that priorities are understood and integrated effectively. Some district representatives stated that when misunderstandings or confusion arise about MPO priorities, districts typically engage in further discussions to resolve the issues. If timing allows, adjustments are made within the current cycle; otherwise, corrections are noted for future cycles or additional funding opportunities.

## **The LOPP document serves multiple functions beyond its initial purpose.**

---

*“We recognize that some of the projects on the LOPP are there to make a point or to set a project up for discretionary grant funding. Some discretionary programs ask if the project is a priority and being on the list helps demonstrate that point.”—FDOT District Representative*

---

The LOPP document can serve as an important tool within the transportation planning process, shaping public discourse and influencing decision making at various levels of governance. Multiple of the MPO and district staff interviewed and surveyed acknowledged that while the LOPP’s primary purpose is to communicate project priorities to their respective district, it often also serves purposes beyond its functional intent. While each district relies on these documents to allocate funding and plan transportation projects, other audiences such as the public, elected officials, and stakeholders also utilize them. Consequently, the contents of the LOPP often extend beyond what the district strictly requires.

The LOPP may include additional information or additional projects to appeal to a broader audience and/or garner needed support. For instance, elected officials or influential stakeholders may push for certain projects to be present on the LOPP to fulfill their political agendas or cater to specific constituencies. Also, securing funding for transportation projects can be highly competitive. Therefore, some projects may be strategically added to the LOPP to increase their chances of receiving discretionary funding from government sources or grant programs. Including certain projects on the LOPP may be aimed at shaping public perception or garnering support for particular initiatives.

Ultimately, LOPPs serve as a multifaceted tool within transportation planning, not only guiding resource allocation, but also influencing public discourse and decision making processes. It’s important to note that while these elements may influence project prioritization, MPOs typically have established processes and criteria for selecting projects for their LOPP. These criteria often include factors such as transportation needs, regional priorities, environmental impact, public input, and feasibility.

## Different methods of organizing LOPPs offer varying levels of clarity, flexibility, and control, catering to diverse regional needs and stakeholder preferences.

---

*“We pretty much support our MPOs’ priorities based on how they present them to us in our meetings, because if they do have multiple lists, there might be some pressure coming from somewhere. If you were to just look at the list, I think it would be difficult to ascertain what the true priorities are, but it's the communication piece that goes along with it, right? We've got a really good relationship with our MPOs to where we talk it through with them to see what their priorities are.” —FDOT District Representative*

---

While some of Florida’s 27 MPOs opt for a simplified approach with only one or two lists within their LOPP, the vast majority have LOPPs consisting of anywhere from 1 to 13 lists, organized by mode, potential funding source, objectives established in the LRTP/MTP, and more (see Figure 5). There are advantages associated with both a smaller number of lists and a more extensive number of lists. Opting for a smaller number of lists may streamline the prioritization process, offering simplicity and clarity in decision making. It may reduce complexity for stakeholders and ensure a more focused allocation of resources towards a limited set of priorities. Conversely, having a larger number of lists might enable a finer granularity in project categorization, accommodating diverse project types and funding sources. This approach could allow for tailored funding strategies for specific project categories and enhanced transparency in resource allocation. Moreover, a comprehensive array of lists might better reflect the multifaceted transportation needs of the region, ensuring that a wide spectrum of projects is considered for funding and implementation.

Elements present in the surveyed MPO’s LOPPs included numbered rankings, tables with project details, explanations of methodology or rationale for project selection, and in some cases projects from previous LOPPs that have been fully funded or completed. The survey results also showed that MPOs employ different approaches to organize their LOPP lists. The projects are often categorized based on their mode (e.g., transit, bicycle/pedestrian, highway) or program categories defined in the LRTP/MTP. Common categories of lists found in LOPPs include:

- **Program Categories:** Many MPOs organize their LOPP lists by program categories based on LRTP/MTP or other plans such as Complete Streets, TSM&O, and the Congestion Management Process.
- **Mode-Specific:** Many MPOs organize the lists on their LOPP by mode, such as roadway projects, transit projects, airport, or bicycle and pedestrian projects.
- **Funding Sources:** Many MPOs may also have separate lists within their LOPPs based on the funding sources available for specific projects. For example, there may be a list specifically for projects eligible for federal funding, state funding, or other funding or grant programs.

- **Regional Priorities:** One type of list commonly found within LOPPs is regional priorities. These are project lists that are jointly created with neighboring MPOs, where priorities are shared among the participating MPOs.
- **Geographic Area:** Although not indicated in survey responses, some MPOs include the organizational element of geographic areas within their LOPP—providing separate lists for projects in different regions or sub-areas within their jurisdiction.
- **Categories of Importance:** Another method used by some MPOs is to organize their lists by categories of importance, such as Tier 1, Tier 2, etc.

The survey of Florida’s 27 MPOs indicated a level of frustration regarding statewide policy priorities potentially diverting funds from local objectives, underscoring a desire for LOPP structures that safeguard and emphasize local interests. There is also an acknowledgment by both MPO and district staff that political factors play a role in the creation and maintenance of multiple lists. Keeping various projects on the list(s) helps satisfy the interests of different stakeholders and maintains support from a diverse group of decision makers.

An additional consideration regarding lists in an LOPP is the significance of the rank. The importance of ranking projects once they are included in the LOPP varied among the individuals interviewed for the case examples in Chapter 5. Interviewees from District 2 and North Florida TPO, for instance, noted that while projects on the “Main” list are ranked, both the TPO and district view all 20 projects with equal importance. The decision to utilize ranking as a decision making tool within the LOPP comes down to the balance between flexibility and control. Maintaining rank as a strict criterion for programming offers a level of control for the MPO but limits flexibility for the district. Conversely, forgoing rank provides flexibility to the district but requires the MPO to relinquish some of its control.

Ultimately, the optimal number of lists in an MPO's LOPP depends on the specific characteristics and needs of the region as well as the preferences of stakeholders involved in the transportation planning process. Both approaches have their merits, and each MPO strives to strike a balance between simplicity and flexibility based on their circumstances. Despite the complexities, the consensus from those interviewed and surveyed is that effective communication can ensure the rationale behind the multiple lists and how projects are prioritized within and between them are understood. Many MPOs have devised methods for communicating overall priorities within the LOPP document. The case examples demonstrate the following four unique methods: the 2-list limit, the “top 20” list, the main list, and funding program categories.

### The 2-List Limit

Among Florida's 27 MPOs, only three MPOs have developed their LOPP with two or fewer lists. Pasco County MPO’s LOPP, for example, includes only a Multimodal Transportation list and a TAP list. This methodology streamlines the prioritization process, offering clarity for district planning staff, work program staff, stakeholders, and the public. This method also provides districts with a heightened degree of flexibility in leveraging diverse funding sources during programming, ensuring optimal utilization of funds to support a maximal number of projects. Conversely, limiting the LOPP to one or two lists may oversimplify the prioritization process, potentially overlooking the nuances and complexities of individual projects. MPOs characterized by diverse funding programs, modal priorities,

and strategic investment objectives typically necessitate more than two lists to effectively communicate their region's priorities.

### The “Top 20” List

Two Florida MPOs, Lake-Sumter MPO and Ocala Marion TPO, use a "Top 20" approach to prioritize projects in their LOPP. Lake-Sumter MPO's LOPP, for example, includes 133 priority projects divided into ten lists, each ranked beginning with #1. The "Top 20" list selects projects from these categories, covering various areas like roadway capacity, safety, bike/ped, and planning studies. This list indicates to the district that these diverse projects should be prioritized first, utilizing all available funding sources. This method provides similar advantages to the 2-List method described above (i.e., simplicity, clarity, and flexibility for district staff) with the added benefit of providing the district and other stakeholders with a selection of supplementary projects that align with specific funding sources. This menu of projects proves particularly beneficial when alternative funding methods become available, such as special grant programs or developer funding, allowing for quick identification of qualifying projects.

### The Main List

North Florida TPO employs a Main List approach to organizing their LOPP. The "Region-Wide Priority Projects" list serves as the main focal point for programming decisions for the Tentative Work Program, signaling that all urban attributable funds and any remaining state and federal "district-controlled" funds should be directed to these multimodal projects. The key difference between this method and the “Top 20” method is that projects on the Main List are not populated from other lists in the LOPP. The four counties within North Florida TPO’s jurisdiction are each guaranteed a number of projects for inclusion on the Main List.<sup>10</sup> By designating a standalone list and limiting the list to 20 priority projects, member agencies are encouraged to prioritize and submit only their most critical projects. This ensures that resources are allocated exclusively to high-priority projects, eliminating any projects that may dilute the focus. With every project on the Main List considered a top priority, there's greater assurance that all urban attributable funds are directed towards the most pressing transportation needs, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilization. The other nine lists in the North Florida TPO LOPP are designed to be funded only using specific funds that match the project category the list depicts (i.e., aviation, transit, seaport, transportation alternatives, SUN Trails, and TRIP).

This approach offers comparable benefits to the methods mentioned above, including enhanced simplicity, clarity, and flexibility for district staff. Moreover, it shifts the task of selecting and prioritizing projects from the MPO to local agencies, thereby emphasizing the significance of local objectives and community input. However, potential drawbacks include restricting the funding focus solely to urban

---

<sup>10</sup> While there is no set rule and the numbers are subject to change, generally each year counties can assume the following number of projects on the Main List: seven for Duval County, five for St. Johns County, five for Clay County, and three for Nassau County.

attributable funds and the potential to overlook smaller-scale initiatives or projects that address niche needs within the region.

### Funding Program Categories

Two Florida MPOs, Broward MPO and MetroPlan Orlando, organize their LOPP based on funding programs that have been established and approved in their LRTPs/MTPs. Broward MPO, for example, organizes its LOPP based on six funding programs, assigns predetermined percentages of its urban attributable funds to each of the six funding programs, and notes preferred funding sources for each project. From a district perspective, a potential downside of organizing an LOPP by funding programs is that it limits flexibility during the programming process and when assigning funding sources to projects. However, from the MPO's perspective, this approach offers greater autonomy and control over the allocation of funds, allowing for a more structured and deliberate distribution based on regional priorities and strategic objectives. It also provides clarity on the allocation of funds and the types of projects eligible for funding under each program. This transparency helps stakeholders, agencies, and the public understand how funding decisions are made.

### MPOs and districts vary in their funding allocation strategies.

---

*“There's a project that we recently programmed—we have state funding on it, we have SU funding on it, we have some TRIP or CIGP funding on it, and [the MPO] actually went after a federal grant as well. So, where we can make those hodge-podge fundings work—we do.” —FDOT District Representative*

---

While each district has access to multiple funding sources for projects in the LOPP, some districts interviewed focus on allocating primarily SU and TA funding. For instance, North Florida TPO has 10 separate lists in their LOPP. Nine of the lists are designed to be funded only using specific funds that match the project category the list depicts (i.e., aviation, transit, seaport, transportation alternatives, SUN Trails, and TRIP). Placing projects on any of these lists is meant as a signal to District 2 to only program these projects if a certain corresponding type of funding is available. The District 2 staff develops a separate priority list for SIS projects and while the TPO can request changes to the list, generally the TPO accepts the district's judgment on these SIS priorities and places it unchanged on their LOPP. The “Region-Wide Priority Projects” list in the North Florida TPO LOPP is considered by both the TPO and District 2 as the “main” list when considering projects for programming into the Tentative Work Program. Placing projects on this list signals to the district that all SU funds and any remaining state and federal “district-controlled” funds should be prioritized for these 20 projects. The representatives from the TPO and District 2 both expressed their approval of this approach as it facilitates efficient funding allocation, ensuring that resources are directed towards the most pressing transportation needs in the region.

Other districts interviewed rely on more flexible or ad hoc methods for allocating funds. The District 4 representative, for instance, emphasized the complexity of funding transportation projects and the importance of flexibility in allocating resources. While SU funds were mentioned most often as funds considered for programming top projects on the LOPP, District 4 noted that there are over 100

different fund codes<sup>11</sup> available and the district diligently seeks out these additional sources to support projects. Broward MPO’s approach to fund allocation is very different from North Florida TPO’s. Rather than placing all projects they would like to see programmed with SU funds into one list, Broward MPO created six funding programs and assigned allocation percentages for their urban attributable funds (Table 5).

**Table 5. Broward MPO Program and Funding Allocations**

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>ALLOCATION</b>
Highway/Roadway	20%
Transit	10%
Systems Management/Safety	15%
Complete Streets and Other Localized Initiatives Program (CSLIP)	20%
Complete Streets Master Plan (CSMP)	25%
Mobility Hubs	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Broward 2024 Multimodal Priorities List p. 3.

Under this system, Broward MPO outlines a comprehensive strategy for funding various types of projects, emphasizing the utilization of multiple funding sources for each identified program. For example, within the Highway/Roadway<sup>12</sup> program, Broward MPO proposes allocating 20% of their SU funds to projects listed in their Highway/Roadway project list. Additionally, in alignment with guidelines from the FDOT Revenue Forecasting Guidebook, Broward MPO anticipates leveraging 10% of the FDOT estimates for non-Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and other roadway construction and right-of-way funds for non-State roadway capacity improvements.<sup>13</sup> Any other funding sources that can be allocated to Highway/Roadway projects are pursued by the MPO and district until either all funding sources are exhausted or the program funding threshold is met (e.g., the first 35 of 50 projects fall within the Highway/Roadway program funding threshold).

---

<sup>11</sup> As of March 2024, there are 228 unique funding codes Work Program staff may utilize. More information on these codes can be found here: <https://fdotewp1.dot.state.fl.us/fmsupportapps/WorkProgram/support/appendixd.aspx?CT=FC>

<sup>12</sup> Broward MPO’s Highway/Roadway list does not contain SIS projects, only non-state road and state arterial roadway projects.

<sup>13</sup> Broward MPO identifies the following in their 2024 Long-Range Transportation Plan (Broward MPO, 2024, p. 5-7): According to the FDOT Revenue Forecasting Guidebook (July 2018), MPOs in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs), such as the Broward MPO, can assume that 10% of the FDOT estimates for non-Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) other roadway construction and right-of-way funds can be used for non-State roadway capacity improvements.

## MPOs shared similar factors when deciding which projects to include in their LOPPs.

---

*“We’ve had success getting priorities funded and it’s had to do with ensuring feasibility of projects and overall stability of the list. Which projects have some line of sight we can see all the way to the end with a price point that we know we can move the needle on? That’s how we are creating a priority list of projects that can actually move.” —MPO Representative*

---

In determining which projects make it onto the priority list for funding and programming, several key considerations come into play. These considerations speak to the balance between project priority, available funding, and readiness for implementation. MPOs use various methods to evaluate and prioritize projects for their LOPPs. These methods include cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA), which assesses the costs and benefits to identify projects with the greatest transportation benefits relative to their costs, and multicriteria decision analysis (MCDA), which considers factors like transportation benefits, environmental impacts, social equity, economic development, and community priorities for a holistic evaluation.

Some MPOs surveyed and interviewed use scoring criteria to evaluate projects and assign scores based on predetermined factors. These criteria can include factors such as congestion relief, safety improvements, environmental sustainability, equity considerations, and public support. Projects are then ranked based on their scores, and those with higher scores are given higher priority in the LOPP.

Additionally, some MPOs use performance measures to evaluate projects based on specific goals and targets. These measures can include metrics such as travel time savings, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction, air quality improvements, or mode shift to sustainable transportation options. Projects that contribute to achieving these performance targets are prioritized in the LOPP. MPOs may also consider stakeholder input as part of the evaluation process. This can involve soliciting feedback from the public, community organizations, elected officials, and other stakeholders. Stakeholder input helps ensure that projects reflect the needs and priorities of the community and can influence project prioritization decisions. MPOs often combine these methods to make informed decisions, aligning selected projects with their transportation goals and providing the greatest benefit to the community.

### Cost versus Priority

Based on survey and case example interview responses, the primary reason highly ranked projects don't get funded is due to limited funding resources. Despite a project's priority ranking, if the cost exceeds available funding, it may not be feasible for programming. This is particularly challenging for larger, more expensive projects. However, while MPO and district representatives acknowledged that project cost heavily influences programming decisions, examples were given in which MPO and district staff worked together to find creative solutions to funding hurdles. Some of these examples provided include:



*Strategically breaking down high-cost projects into manageable phases:* Breaking down large, expensive projects into smaller, more manageable phases can facilitate incremental funding allocation and reduce the financial burden at any single point in time. For instance, a District 4 representative highlighted a \$52 million project in Martin County that was divided into two \$26 million segments to make funding more manageable. Similarly, Pasco County MPO representatives discussed a major project that initially faced funding challenges. The district chose to break up the project and segment the funding, which led to adjustments in the timeline and funding allocations. While this approach may cause some segments to remain unfunded temporarily, it ultimately ensures that large projects continue to progress over time. Pasco County MPO emphasized the importance of this strategy for major projects, particularly those focused on widening major arterials, reflecting the ongoing efforts to secure and allocate funding efficiently despite the complexities involved.

*Leveraging deeper knowledge of grant and earmark funding:* Some MPOs dedicate time to explore additional sources of funding for project priorities. This can involve identifying underutilized grants or lobbying for specific earmarks tailored to the region's needs. Both Lake-Sumter MPO and Broward MPO, for example, mentioned screening LOPP projects for federal discretionary grant funding. They strategically include projects in their priority lists to position them for federal grants or earmarks, understanding that some projects are listed primarily to demonstrate priority status when pursuing additional funding.

While this proactive approach has led to the funding of prioritized projects, MPO representatives observed that earmarking should be approached with caution because it can lead to the allocation of funds to projects that have not been prioritized or vetted through the established planning processes of MPOs. This can disrupt the careful balance of funding allocations and undermine long-standing priorities. Instead, when seeking earmarked funds, stakeholders should ensure they are allocated to projects already prioritized within the MPO's LOPP. This ensures that funding is used efficiently and effectively, supporting projects that have been thoroughly evaluated and deemed essential by the MPO and the community.

*Partnership projects and local funding:* Collaboration and partnerships are often advantageous for advancing projects, especially when funding gaps exist. By pooling resources from multiple stakeholders, including MPOs and local governments, projects can overcome financial obstacles and move forward. Survey responses from MPO representatives frequently mentioned the advantages of collaboration and partnerships in advancing projects, and three of the four case example MPOs mentioned that local funds can influence project prioritization within the LOPP. Projects for which a county or municipality provides funding or advanced construction may receive higher priority or be programmed more quickly.

For instance, a District 5 representative noted that partnership projects are a key strategy to advance large, expensive projects for Lake-Sumter MPO and other MPOs in their district. In this region, many top-priority projects have moved forward through partnerships involving MPOs, local governments, and the district itself. These partnerships bring together various funding sources, such as grant funds, SU funds, and local funds, to bridge financial gaps. For example, local governments might contribute a portion of the project cost, which can make a significant difference in moving the project forward. The

district representative also observed that local investment not only provides essential financial support but also demonstrates a commitment to the project, making it more likely to be included in the work program.

One note of caution mentioned by multiple MPO and district representatives on the subject of the complexity of funding sources is that different funding sources have specific requirements and limitations that impact project feasibility. For example, certain projects may require matching funds, and if those funds aren't available, the project may not proceed. Considering various funding sources adds complexity to the decision making process, but MPOs can aid in this task by building in a balance of guidance and flexibility into their LOPP.

*Integration of 3-R and non-capacity improvements:* Each of the four case example district representatives pointed out that they often include non-capacity improvements as part of broader 3-R (Resurfacing, Restoration, and Rehabilitation) projects. Where applicable, projects on an MPO's LOPP are considered for alignment with upcoming 3-R projects to streamline programming. If there's a match, the district may inform the MPO or local agency about the upcoming 3-R project and request that the priority of the project be elevated accordingly. One constraint is that the 3-R program operates on a three-year cycle, limiting visibility beyond that timeframe. There is a concerted effort between districts and MPOs/local jurisdictions to coordinate non-capacity projects (e.g., complete streets, bike paths) with 3-R projects to maximize resources and efficiency.

### Program Readiness

Two of the four case example MPOs and their respective districts mentioned that projects need to meet certain criteria to be considered "program ready" and placed on the LOPP. Elements that increase a project's program readiness include (1) a well-defined scope, (2) accurate cost estimates, (3) resolutions of support from involved agencies, (4) no major environmental issues, (5) a specific timeline for project completion, (6) a specific agency for project implementation, and (7) evidence of collaboration among partners. Each MPO had varying definitions of program readiness and maintained diverse thresholds regarding the readiness level expected for projects to be included in their LOPPs.

All four districts mentioned that their staff engaged in some level of feasibility checks for projects. Three of the district representatives mentioned during the interview process that they used "vetting" or "scoping" teams to evaluate program readiness and assist local agencies in making projects program-ready. Personnel on these teams scrutinize each project to ensure it meets program readiness criteria and identify any potential issues early in the process. The fourth district representative didn't mention a team per se but did state that they provide technical assistance to local agencies to frame out the project scope, sometimes going so far as to develop the scope of the proposed project on behalf of the local agency. Similarly, two of the MPOs interviewed mentioned that they provide technical assistance to all project sponsors. Representatives from three MPOs discussed their use of forms, applications, and the GAP system to collect information from project sponsors regarding projects for inclusion in the LOPP. However, a recurring challenge MPO interviewees highlighted was the varying quality level of information provided in these applications completed by local agencies, which sometimes hindered the evaluation process.

## Project Priority Stability

Three of the district representatives interviewed emphasized the importance of maintaining project priorities between phases and years so that top priorities are funded through construction. They stressed that while projects can move slightly in priority on the LOPP, significant shifts can disrupt funding and project progress. Likewise, several MPO representatives indicated in the survey that they felt maintaining stability in the LOPP is crucial for effective funding and project implementation. Many of these responses highlighted the importance of stability for accurate tracking of project status, enabling MPO staff to provide up-to-date information to stakeholders and to coordinate funding opportunities. This practice was seen as particularly important for projects that only have design funding initially, as it helps secure the necessary subsequent phases through ongoing coordination. Many MPO representatives also noted that having consistent project priorities and avoiding frequent changes or removals from the LOPP helps FDOT better plan and allocate resources, thereby preventing wasted efforts and ensuring more reliable project progression.

Some MPO representatives mention challenges related to projects that receive funding for early phases but face delays in subsequent phases, such as construction. They discuss potential issues with work in earlier phases becoming stale over time and the need for consistent prioritization to avoid delays. At least one district provided examples of how changes in project scopes or delays in certain phases could impact overall project funding and programming. This highlights the challenges of maintaining project momentum and avoiding wasted resources.

**Turnover is generally perceived as manageable, with proactive measures such as on-the-job training, institutional knowledge transfer, and training on fundamentals seen as effective strategies to mitigate its effects on the LOPP development process.**

---

*“I think basic training is necessary not just for FDOT staff and MPO staff, but probably other member government staff as well. At a minimum, they should understand the fundamentals and have a basic grasp of the lay of the land. And understanding federal regulations is crucial. What does the federal circular say? I love the idea of a basic training.”—MPO Interviewee*

---

Opinions on the effect of turnover among MPO staff, district staff, and MPO Board members vary slightly among those interviewed, but the general consensus was that turnover does not hinder the LOPP development process significantly. Regarding district staff turnover, some interviewees acknowledged it as a potential challenge, noting that new staff members, especially MPO liaisons, require time to familiarize themselves with the LOPP process. Most of the individuals interviewed from the case example MPOs and their respective districts expressed confidence in their ability to manage district staff turnover effectively, stating that they provide support and on-the-job training to new MPO liaisons to ensure a smooth transition. Overall, while district staff turnover is recognized as a factor

that can impact operations, interviewees generally believe they could mitigate its effects through proactive measures.

When discussing MPO staff turnover, opinions are generally positive, with most interviewees indicating that turnover within the MPOs has not been a significant issue. They highlight stability among MPO directors and key staff members, noting that this continuity facilitates smooth operations and decision making processes. Overall, those interviewed tended to believe that MPO staff turnover has not had a major impact on their project prioritization efforts.

Regarding MPO Board member turnover, the interviewees generally acknowledged its occurrence but did not view it as a major impediment to the LOPP process. The most frequent comments on the subject were concerns about the understanding of newly appointed board members regarding the prioritization process and the purpose of the LOPP. Interviewees emphasized the importance of continuity and institutional knowledge within the MPO Board to maintain consistency in project prioritization and decision making. Additionally, there were discussions about how turnover may lead to new board members questioning existing project rankings and priorities. Overall, while MPO Board member turnover was discussed, it was generally not perceived as a significant obstacle in the LOPP process.

Despite perceptions that turnover was not a significant issue, there was recognition of the necessity for ongoing education and training for new staff and board members to ensure alignment with established processes and priorities. Throughout the interviews, there was a strong emphasis on the value of learning through hands-on experience, with many interviewees emphasizing the benefits of practical immersion over formal training programs. They maintained that staff members gain more from active involvement in projects and meetings, given the unique approach of each MPO and the role of relationship-building in the LOPP process. Some participants also stressed the significance of continuity among senior staff, who serve as valuable mentors for new hires and offer guidance when needed.

While the consensus favored on-the-job learning, there was also a recognition of the need for basic training to establish a common understanding. Several interviewees highlighted the importance of staff and board members comprehending the intricacies of the LOPP process, including the development of LRTPs, LOPPs, TIPs, the STIP, and the FDOT Work Program. One district interviewee emphasized the necessity of understanding federal law and regulations, citing past instances where personnel made errors due to a lack of awareness. They also mentioned the absence of formal onboarding orientation for new staff, attributing it to staffing shortages and the need for all-hands-on-deck. One interviewee recalled their own onboarding experience, which included a formal orientation session with the Office of Policy Planning (OPP) covering various aspects of MPO responsibilities, including LRTP, TIP, and STIP. However, they noted that such formal training sessions have become less frequent due to staffing constraints. Two interviewees highlighted the importance of clear and concise resources like handbooks and manuals but expressed frustration with the lack of updates and clarity in these documents.

While some interviewees emphasized that each district or region may have unique processes and approaches to project development, making statewide or generic training less effective, most of the interviewees expressed openness to improved practices and acknowledged the potential value of

general training at the MPO 101 level to provide an overview of key concepts and processes. This suggests a need for a balance between basic formal training and practical experience tailored to the specific needs of liaisons and staff within each district and MPO.

## **Variations exist in LOPP timelines, and these variations may have an impact on planning efficiency.**

---

*“We've backed up the submission of our LOPP to a February/March timeframe. So instead of waiting until June or July like most MPOs, we submit our LOPP much earlier. This allows us to get our projects on the very next work program rather than waiting until the following year. For example, if we waited until August to submit our list, the projects wouldn't be considered until the next year. By submitting earlier, we're essentially accelerating the process and ensuring that our projects are prioritized sooner.”*  
—MPO Interviewee

---

According to state statute, the LOPP is due to the district from MPOs by August 1 each year. However, the timing of LOPP review and submission varies among MPOs. For instance, Lake-Sumter MPO, Pasco County MPO, and Broward MPO each share their draft LOPPs with their Governing Board and committees in April or May and submit their final LOPPs to their respective districts by the end of June or early July. In contrast, North Florida TPO submits its draft LOPP to its Governing Board and committees in February and submits the final LOPP to the district in March.

The interviewee from North Florida TPO explained that they develop their LOPP earlier than most of their colleagues to align with current year needs rather than waiting for the next year's delivery. They adopt their priority list in March, allowing them to position themselves for the next Work Program round by the fall. This proactive approach enables them to allocate funds to projects sooner and have a more immediate impact on project development and implementation.

After adopting the priority project list in March, they immediately begin the funding process in June. This involves working with District 2 to develop a detailed spreadsheet showing projects from the past five years and the upcoming five years. They identify projects aligned with their priorities and add them to the spreadsheet, attaching funds to them, typically SU dollars. This comprehensive spreadsheet is then presented to MPO Board members in June, providing them with a clear overview of the prioritized projects and their funding allocations.

For MPOs that submit their LOPP closer to the August 1st deadline, some interviewees mentioned frustration due to disjointed timelines for submission of project applications from local agencies and the submission of the final LOPP to the district. For instance, during one interview, a question regarding the rationale behind setting application deadlines in March when final LOPP submissions are due by August 1<sup>st</sup> was posed. Local agencies are responsible for submitting project applications. The submitted applications are then reviewed and prioritized by respective MPOs for inclusion in their LOPPs. However, if a timing discrepancy exists, projects submitted within a certain timeframe may not be included in the current LOPP cycle. This type of misalignment could hamper efficient project

prioritization and result in project implementation setbacks. The interviewees reflected on the historical context of application requirements and suggested a need for reevaluation to better synchronize timelines and optimize the planning process.

Another MPO representative highlighted concerns regarding the tight timeframe between the release of the draft Tentative Work Program and the Governing Board's approval, which typically occurred just two weeks later. This short period doesn't allow sufficient time for thorough review and conversations between FDOT and MPO staff to resolve issues. After the release of the draft Tentative Work Program, MPO staff must quickly prepare agenda items for their next MPO Governing Board meeting, which includes approval of the Draft Tentative Work Program along with staff recommendations on what needs to be changed in the Draft Tentative Work Program. If MPO staff get advance notice, they have time to coordinate with district Work Program staff prior to presenting the Draft Tentative Work Program to their MPO Board and are more likely to get the Work Program approved without additional board action. However, changing the timeline may require legislative action, indicating a need for compromise and collaboration between stakeholders to address timing issues effectively.

Overall, the MPO and district representatives interviewed acknowledge the complexities involved in managing these timelines, especially considering the involvement of multiple stakeholders and agencies. These conversations underscore the significance of aligning timelines for project applications, LOPP adoption, and Work Program creation, and the ongoing efforts to navigate these challenges and enhance collaboration among stakeholders involved in transportation planning and development.

## **MPOs noted challenges and adjustments related to LOPP development and implementation.**

---

*“The quality of applications is probably the weakest point in the whole process. I always warn the local agencies, ‘30 grumpy engineers are going to review this thing.’ It’s crucial to get it right. And with GAP in place now, there’s even more pressure to ensure the applications are accurate and complete.”*

*—MPO Interviewee*

---

Based on the survey responses, several barriers to the successful development and implementation of the List of Project Priorities (LOPP) were identified. These barriers include:

- **Funding constraints:** Many respondents indicated that the lack of available funds is a significant barrier, particularly those slated for the new fifth year, resulting in few projects being funded. Many felt that the sheer volume of unfunded needs posed a significant barrier to achieving successful LOPP implementation.
- **Complex funding processes:** The lengthy and intricate paths to securing funding can create significant hurdles for project implementation. For some, the complexity of assembling funding packages led to decision makers feeling overwhelmed and giving up.
- **Competing priorities:** There are often competing priorities within districts and between local and state needs. This can lead to difficulties in aligning MPO priorities with those of the district

and state, causing delays or rejections in project funding. Some respondents mentioned tension between addressing immediate system operation needs and focusing on long-term transportation capacity priorities, which can complicate project prioritization.

- **Political pressure:** Political dynamics were mentioned as a possible influence on project prioritization, with pressure to subsidize new developments at the expense of existing needs. There is also political pressure from the top to implement legislative and gubernatorial priorities and programs. This can result in the misalignment of projects with actual performance data and community needs.
- **Communication and coordination challenges:** Poor communication and coordination between MPOs, local governments, and FDOT can hinder the LOPP process. This includes difficulties in getting accurate project information, lack of transparency in decision making, and changes in staff or decision makers affecting project continuity.
- **Procedural and structural issues:** Extremely complicated procedures for project funding and implementation cause delays and confusion. The existing policies and procedures, which have remained unchanged for years, may no longer be effective or efficient. Some MPO representatives also mentioned inefficiencies in the LOPP process due to the large number of project submittals from local jurisdictions and ever-changing priorities.
- **Ineffective public and stakeholder engagement:** Public and stakeholder engagement practices are not always effective in conveying the role and limitations of the LOPP. Lack of local understanding of the LOPP's purpose, leading to frustration when projects are not immediately funded or implemented.
- **Overly large priority lists:** Some district respondents felt that MPOs have priority lists that are too large, making it difficult to focus on and fund the most critical projects. This can dilute the effectiveness of the LOPP and create frustration when projects are not funded.
- **Lengthy project timelines:** The extended duration required to complete capacity projects, from Project Development and Environment (PDE) studies to design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction, can impede the timely implementation of projects. One respondent added that projects often drag on indefinitely, fueled by the perception that there is ample funding for widening projects (as suggested by new federal bills), but project costs frequently increase significantly from initial estimates, leading to funding shortfalls once bids are received and far exceed the engineer's cost estimate.
- **Challenges with adopting and managing the GAP (Grants Application Program) system:** The GAP is a tool implemented by the FDOT to manage the application and funding process for transportation projects. The introduction of the GAP system requires MPOs to take on a more active role in managing project applications and ensuring their accuracy and completeness. Prior to the introduction of the GAP system, the process was sometimes fragmented, involving manual paperwork and disparate data sources submitted to FDOT districts across different jurisdictions and agencies. By centralizing project information and documentation within the GAP system, FDOT aimed to create a more efficient and standardized process for evaluating and prioritizing transportation projects. However, this shift in responsibility also placed a heavier burden on MPOs, requiring them to invest additional time and resources into managing the application process. The GAP system is relatively new, so MPOs are still in the process of

adjusting to the system. Challenges related to the GAP system that were mentioned by the interviewees include the following:

- The process was described as causing a significant workload increase, particularly for MPO staff who must now upload applications they received into the GAP. Some MPO staff suggested training for project sponsors and a shift in responsibility for uploading project information to project sponsors to improve efficiency and accuracy.
- For some, there was confusion about which projects to submit to GAP, especially when dealing with multiple funding sources. Some districts request that all projects be added to GAP, some ask only for TA funded- projects, and others do not require any projects to be added to GAP.
- There is ongoing confusion about how to handle the mixing of funds on a single project for inclusion in the GAP system. One district representative suggested simplifying by using only one type of funding per project. However, some MPOs prefer to continue mixing funds.
- There was disagreement about the number of projects to upload into GAP—all projects (which would be a large undertaking for MPO staff each year) or just the top prioritized projects.
- There was discussion about the timing of when project applications were due relative to when the LOPP is adopted, highlighting potential timing issues.
- The quality of applications received by MPOs from local agencies varied depending on the size and resources of the local agencies. Some MPO staff suggested that MPOs or districts could offer assistance to ensure that applications are adequately filled out and meet the requirements prior to inclusion in the GAP system. Another MPO representative suggested that project sponsors should receive training to improve the quality of applications.
- One MPO representative expressed frustration that the introduction of the GAP system has caused local agencies to relinquish the responsibility of submitting quality applications to the MPO. This person stated that the new system hurt their ability to get good information from their locals because the locals no longer felt that it was their responsibility. The MPO representative felt that they had lost connectivity and goodwill for their local jurisdictions on their project applications during this process.



## Chapter 7: Suggestions for Improved Practice

To build on the insights and findings from the literature review, surveys, and case studies, we offer several suggestions for enhancing collaboration, streamlining processes, and improving project prioritization and funding allocation. These suggestions are intended to provide guidance and inspire local adaptations rather than serve as one-size-fits-all solutions. Each agency should consider these ideas within the context of their unique circumstances, focusing on what aligns best with their specific needs and goals. The aim is to share valuable insights and practices that might be useful while encouraging flexibility and customization to fit local contexts.

### 1. Encourage enhanced communication

Encourage MPOs and districts to establish clear and regular communication channels. The surveys and case studies reiterated that quality, frequent, and consistent communication is a significant element in helping MPO and district staff understand each other's priorities and goals better. Success was often cited as stemming from discussions and coordination with the district before and after the submittal of the LOPP. For MPOs, this means they can explain local needs and goals effectively while fitting into FDOT's bigger transportation plans. District staff also saw that when MPOs communicate clearly, it helps them make informed decisions and allocate resources efficiently during Work Program development. One district representative mentioned regular coordination with MPOs to discuss programming details, such as project funding status and cost changes. They also provide MPOs with choices on which projects can proceed with funding and which ones might need to be delayed or adjusted based on available resources. Early and frequent engagement between agencies results in generally positive outcomes, minimizing surprises when the Tentative Work Program is revealed. This can include scheduled in-person meetings, meetings on virtual platforms, or regular phone calls. Clear communication helps both parties understand project priorities and navigate challenges collaboratively.

### 2. Encourage and facilitate relationship building

Navigating the process of prioritizing projects and allocating funds across districts is complex and often leads to challenges where not everyone's preferences can be fully met. This inherently creates feelings of disappointment and frustration among stakeholders. However, building strong relationships between MPOs and districts plays a crucial role in managing these situations constructively. When MPOs and districts have established trust and open communication, they can navigate uncomfortable conversations about project priorities more effectively. Strong relationships enable them to understand each other's constraints, priorities, and perspectives, which are essential for finding compromises and making collective decisions that benefit all parties involved. Ultimately, these relationships foster collaboration and teamwork, allowing MPOs and districts to work together towards achieving the best possible outcomes for Florida's citizens, visitors, and businesses, even in situations where not everyone's ideal scenario can be realized.

- **Joint workshops and training sessions:** Organize joint workshops or training sessions where FDOT and MPO staff can learn together about new policies, procedures, and technical aspects

related to project development and funding allocation. Also, workshops or training sessions where MPO and district staff can learn about each other's processes, priorities, and constraints. This mutual understanding would foster empathy and enhance the effectiveness of collaboration on LOPP and Work Program development.

- **Site visits and field tours:** Arrange instances in which FDOT and MPO staff can observe important spaces related to the LOPP firsthand. This allows for a better understanding of local contexts, challenges, and community impacts, fostering understanding and shared commitment to project success.
- **Celebrating achievements and milestones:** Recognize and celebrate joint achievements, milestones, and successful collaborations. This positive reinforcement would reinforce teamwork and encourage continued commitment to building strong relationships.

### 3. Define terminology for clarity and transparency

Terms such as "highway," "roadway," and "capacity" often appear in many LOPPs but can have different meanings when used by different agencies. To avoid confusion and improve transparency, MPOs may consider including definitions and examples of these and other terms in their LOPP documents. This will align expectations and facilitate better communication with stakeholders and the public. Additionally, FDOT, in coordination with the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC), may develop standardized terminology to ensure that all MPOs have a common understanding of these terms.

### 4. Incorporate regional priority lists

One theme that emerged from the surveys and case studies is regional cooperation, with several MPOs reporting the inclusion of regional project priorities developed jointly with neighboring MPOs. Notable collaborations include Broward MPO, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, Indian River County MPO, Lee County MPO, MetroPlan Orlando, Miami-Dade TPO, and Polk TPO. However, while 16 MPOs were identified as participating in joint regional project priority list development, not all included these regional lists in their LOPPs. MPOs should consider including regional project priorities in their LOPPs to improve communication with partners and stakeholders. This ensures that officials and citizens are aware of regional collaborations without needing to refer to multiple documents. Creating a dedicated section within the LOPP for regional projects would help distinguish local priorities from regional ones, maintaining clarity while showcasing cooperative efforts.

### 5. Integrate prioritization methodology in LOPP

A majority of MPOs make their project scoring methodologies available to FDOT districts and other stakeholders through various dissemination methods. These include detailing criteria within the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), integrating them into Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTP), and directly sharing methodologies with district staff. However, not all MPOs include their approach in their LOPP document, which can lead to interested stakeholders having to search through different documents to find relevant information. Stakeholders, including district staff, local governments, and the public, benefit from clear and accessible information. Including the prioritization

methodology in the LOPP document can centralize this information, making it easier for all parties to understand the criteria used for project selection and prioritization.

## 6. Enhance project application quality and program readiness

A number of MPOs mentioned in the survey that a significant stumbling block to creating a quality LOPP is the lack of quality in project applications from member jurisdictions and agencies. Many grant and project applications submitted in response to a call for projects or other project submittal mechanisms are incomplete and/or unclear, significantly increasing the workload for MPO and district staff. This issue was also brought up by MPOs and district representatives in the case example interviews. Some MPOs noted that projects need to meet certain criteria to be considered "program ready" and placed on the LOPP. Suggestions for enhancing project application quality and program readiness which stem from the survey and case studies include:

- **Providing guidance to local governments (MPOs and districts):** Provide clear guidance to local governments on how to submit quality applications. This guidance details the necessary elements for program readiness and outlines the expectations for project submissions.
- **Provide application support (MPOs):** Provide technical assistance to local governments and other relevant stakeholders in preparing grant applications, navigating funding application processes, and complying with reporting requirements. These entities often compete for state and federal funding, and their ability to submit comprehensive and clear project applications directly impacts their chances of being included in the LOPP and, ultimately, the Tentative Work Program.
- **Provide application support (districts):** Small MPOs may lack the resources to provide comprehensive technical assistance. In such cases, districts can step up to offer this support, ensuring that LOPP projects are well-prepared and meet program readiness criteria.
- **Instituting "vetting" or "scoping" teams (districts):** Districts may consider establishing formal vetting or scoping teams if they have not already done so. These teams can evaluate the program readiness of projects and provide valuable assistance to local agencies.

## 7. Enhancing GAP system efficiency

A number of study participants brought up concerns related to the new GAP system including issues related to managing project submissions, confusion about fund mixing, and varying application quality. To enhance the efficiency of the GAP system and better support MPOs and local agencies, districts may consider providing targeted training for both MPO staff and local project sponsors on the GAP system. This training could also clarify the requirements for making projects program-ready, ensuring that all necessary documentation and information are accurately submitted.

Another suggestion is to increase local agency involvement in the process. Allowing local jurisdictions to handle the upload and management of their own project information within the GAP system, while providing technical support from FDOT, could streamline the process and reduce the burden on MPO staff. By engaging local agencies more actively and ensuring they are aware of the requirements and expectations for GAP submissions, the overall quality of applications can be enhanced, leading to a

more efficient and effective funding process. Another issue identified during the interviews was the relationship between when LOPPs are due and when documentation for the GAP system is due. That timing issue is addressed in suggestion number 8.

## **8. Consider reassessing LOPP timelines to ensure optimal synchronization and enhance the efficiency of the planning process**

To improve the efficiency of the LOPP process, MPOs might consider aligning the timelines for LOPP submissions with local project application deadlines. This could involve revising deadlines so that local agencies' project submissions and LOPP submissions are more closely matched, minimizing discrepancies and ensuring that all relevant projects are included in the current LOPP cycle.

Adopting a proactive planning approach, similar to North Florida TPO where the LOPP is developed earlier to align with current needs and funding cycles, could also help MPOs better position themselves for funding and expedite project development.

## **9. Enhance project stability and develop a process to address stymied projects**

To address concerns related to project stability and funding, MPOs may consider developing a process or policy that ensures consistent project prioritization from year to year. A portion of MPOs already maintain a project's priority status in their LOPP (either within their project lists or as a separate list) until it is fully funded and completed, which helps track progress and secure ongoing support. Other MPOs might consider adopting a similar approach to maintaining a project's priority status within their LOPP process.

But maintaining a project's priority status can result in a project sitting in an LOPP for years without funding for a variety of reasons. MPOs and districts could consider implementing a system for flagging or removing projects that are stalled or facing significant delays. This would provide decision makers and the public with clear information about the project's condition and the reasons for any hold-ups, thus enhancing transparency and helping to manage expectations. Such measures would support effective funding allocation, reduce wasted efforts, and ensure that high-priority projects progress smoothly through all phases.

## **10. Explore noteworthy strategies to overcome funding challenges**

In the survey and interviews, the most often cited reason highly ranked projects become stymied on an MPO's LOPP is limited financial resources. Larger, more expensive projects often face significant hurdles because their costs exceed the available funding. However, some MPOs and district representatives have found innovative ways to overcome funding challenges:

- **Maintain comprehensive project lists:** Many Florida MPOs maintain comprehensive project lists that include projects likely to receive typical federal, state, and local funding, but also strategically include projects that can be funded through earmarks or discretionary funding as

those funds become available. By including additional projects in the LOPP, MPOs signal that these projects are ready and available for funding when unexpected opportunities arise. This readiness allows MPOs to swiftly capitalize on unanticipated federal, state, or local funding opportunities, thus ensuring that important projects are not delayed due to funding constraints.

- **Screen for federal discretionary grants and unexpected funding opportunities:** MPOs should proactively screen their LOPP for eligibility not only for federal discretionary grant funding but also for other types of unexpected or windfall funding, such as funds made available after the FHWA August redistribution or contributions from developers. For example, Lake-Sumter MPO has successfully advanced prioritized projects by remaining flexible and responsive to stray dollars that become available from various funding sources. This approach allows MPOs to fill funding gaps and expedite project implementation, even for projects that may not be at the top of their priority lists.
- **Leverage combined funds:** To optimize project funding and improve resource allocation, MPOs and FDOT districts may consider leveraging combined funds by integrating multiple funding sources, such as TAP funds and Local Initiatives (LI) funds. For example, Broward MPO employs a combination of TAP and LI funds through their Complete Streets & Localized Initiatives Program (CSLIP) program, which enhances funding flexibility and supports a broader range of projects. Similarly, District 7 and Pasco County MPO use consolidated applications for SU and TAP funds.
- **Leverage partnership projects and local funding:** During the survey and interviews, collaboration and partnerships were cited as advantageous for advancing projects, especially when funding gaps exist. By pooling resources from multiple stakeholders, including MPOs, local governments, and even private sector sources, projects are sometimes able to overcome financial obstacles and move forward. For instance, in District 5, partnership projects have been key to advancing large, expensive projects for Lake-Sumter MPO and others. These partnerships bring together various funding sources to bridge financial gaps, with local governments or others contributing a portion of the project cost, thereby demonstrating a commitment that makes the project more likely to be included in the Work Program.
- **Align non-capacity improvements with 3-R projects:** MPOs and districts might consider integrating non-capacity improvements as part of 3-R (Resurfacing, Restoration, and Rehabilitation) projects. Projects on an MPO's LOPP could be aligned with upcoming 3-R projects. Districts may inform MPOs or local agencies about upcoming 3-R projects and request that the priority of related projects be elevated accordingly. Although the 3-R program operates on a three-year cycle, identifying potential alignments can streamline programming and improve project integration.
- **Create a discretionary grant clearinghouse (FDOT):** FDOT may consider producing a discretionary grant clearinghouse— a centralized platform or resource that provides comprehensive information on available federal discretionary grants. These are competitive funding opportunities provided by federal agencies that are not allocated automatically but must be applied for based on specific criteria and priorities. The clearinghouse would consolidate information on various federal discretionary grants into one location, making it easier for MPOs and local governments to find relevant funding opportunities. By centralizing

grant information, the clearinghouse could help standardize application procedures and requirements, reducing the administrative burden on MPOs and local sponsors. This recommendation came directly from one of the MPO representative's survey responses.

## 11. Develop and implement training and education programs

Implement training and education programs for district staff, MPO staff, and stakeholders that submit projects for inclusion in the LOPP. By providing targeted training and technical assistance, we can ensure that all participants have a solid understanding of key concepts and processes, leading to more complete and competitive project applications. This, in turn, will streamline the workload for MPO and district staff, facilitate better collaboration, and ultimately improve the quality and success rate of projects included in the LOPP and the state's Tentative Work Program.

- **MPO 101 Training:** While acknowledging the uniqueness of each district's processes, consider implementing a standardized MPO 101 training program. This program would provide a foundational understanding of key concepts and processes across MPOs, helping new staff (MPO and district) grasp essential frameworks and terminology.
- **Formalize institutional knowledge transfer:** Establish formal processes for institutional knowledge transfer within MPOs and districts. This could include structured mentorship programs where experienced staff actively guide and support new hires, ensuring continuity in decision making and project prioritization.
- **Capacity building workshops:** Host workshops or webinars focused on funding allocation methodologies and best practices. These sessions can educate MPO staff on various funding sources, eligibility criteria, and strategic approaches to maximize funding effectiveness.
- **Share best practices:** Facilitate forums or platforms where MPOs can share successful strategies and practices related to LOPP development. Learning from each other's experiences encourages innovation and efficiency without imposing rigid guidelines.

## 12. Consider adding clarity to LOPP ranking structure

The issue of ensuring clarity in LOPPs for district use in developing the Tentative Work Program is complex. Florida's 27 MPOs demonstrate a range of approaches in this regard. While some MPOs choose a streamlined approach with only one or two lists within their LOPP, the majority utilize a more extensive structure, containing up to 13 lists. These lists are often organized by various criteria, such as mode, funding source, and objectives established in the LRTP or other plans.

Each approach has its benefits and drawbacks. A smaller number of lists can simplify the prioritization process, enhancing clarity and reducing complexity for stakeholders. This can lead to a more focused allocation of resources towards a limited set of priorities, making it easier for districts to understand and implement the MPO's top priorities. On the other hand, a larger number of lists allows for greater granularity in project categorization. This approach accommodates diverse project types and funding sources, facilitating tailored funding strategies and enhancing transparency in resource allocation. It also helps reflect the multifaceted transportation needs of the region, ensuring that a wide spectrum of projects is considered for funding and implementation.

Nearly all District and MPO respondents consistently emphasized that the most important element to ensure that district staff, including work program staff, understand the MPO's priorities is through close and constant communication. However, to address the complexity of LOPP structures and further improve clarity for districts, MPOs might consider the following strategies:

- **Simplified prioritization lists:** Some MPOs may consider reducing the number of lists in their LOPP to streamline priorities. For example, some MPOs, such as Pasco County MPO, use a "2-List Limit" approach, which consolidates priorities into a few key categories. By reducing the number of lists, MPOs can provide districts with maximum flexibility, allowing them to easily navigate and allocate resources to high-priority projects. This streamlined approach enhances clarity, reduces complexity, and ensures that districts can adapt more readily to funding opportunities and project needs.
- **Top project list:** MPOs may consider consolidating multiple lists into a primary "Top 20" or "Main List" to streamline priorities and enhance clarity for district staff, while still maintaining detailed lists for specific project categories to support securing additional funding. For instance, the Lake-Sumter MPO and Ocala Marion TPO use a "Top 20" approach, which highlights key projects across various categories, simplifying the prioritization and allocation process. Similarly, North Florida TPO's "Main List" focuses on top-priority projects. This consolidated approach not only clarifies priority projects but also facilitates strategic funding efforts. By preserving specific lists for project categories, MPOs can ensure that these lists are prepared to effectively pursue alternative funding opportunities, such as federal grants or earmarks. Aligning earmarked funds with projects already prioritized within the MPO's LOPP avoids disrupting established planning processes and ensures that additional funds are used efficiently to support well-vetted, essential projects. This dual approach helps manage priorities clearly while maximizing the potential for additional funding sources.
- **Structured funding program system:** Some MPOs may want to consider organizing their LOPP by funding programs that have been established and approved in their LRTPs/MTPs. For instance, Broward MPO's approach to organizing the LOPP—based on distinct funding programs with predetermined allocations and preferred funding sources—provides a structured and transparent method for fund distribution. This system, which allocates percentages of urban attributable funds to specific programs, enhances clarity by outlining how different types of projects are funded and the sources available for each. For large MPOs with complex LOPP structures, this technique offers a clear framework for managing funds and prioritizing projects. While it might limit districts' flexibility during the programming process, it ensures that funds are allocated strategically according to regional priorities and established objectives. This approach can help simplify the planning process for district staff by providing a well-defined allocation strategy and making it easier to understand how funding decisions are made.

## Chapter 8: Conclusion

This report provides insights into the development and implementation of List of Project Priorities (LOPPs) in Florida, highlighting the importance of collaboration, communication, and flexibility between MPOs and Florida FDOT districts. The findings from a comprehensive literature review, survey results from all Florida MPOs and districts, and more detailed case examples sheds light on various aspects of LOPP development, offering key takeaways for transportation planners and policymakers.

One overarching theme is that each MPO and district possesses its own distinctive characteristics that shape the collaborative methodologies they cultivate. While federal rules provide the underlying foundations for MPOs, local contexts, staffing size, funding availability, and the diverse needs of member agencies necessitate the adoption of distinct collaborative processes tailored to each MPO's planning and political context. Understanding and accommodating the unique characteristics of each MPO and district is fundamental when developing LOPPs.

The report highlights several key findings, including the importance of program readiness, project priority stability, effective management of staff turnover, alignment of LOPP timelines, and addressing challenges related to project applications and the GAP system. The findings suggest the need for ongoing collaboration, training, and process improvements to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the LOPP development process. By addressing these key areas, MPOs and districts can better prioritize transportation projects and ensure the successful implementation of their long-range transportation plans. This report also emphasizes the importance of tailored approaches that consider the unique characteristics and needs of each MPO and district. By understanding these key findings, transportation planners and policymakers can enhance the effectiveness of LOPP development and improve transportation planning and programming processes.

The findings of this report were based on qualitative insights from literature reviews, surveys, and case studies. While these inputs provided rich descriptions of LOPP development practices, the reliance on qualitative data could benefit from additional quantitative analysis for a more robust understanding and validation of trends in transportation planning methodologies. Addressing these limitations could enhance future research efforts aimed at improving Lists of Project Priorities (LOPP) development practices and policies nationwide. Additionally, this topic would likely benefit from a longitudinal study to track the implementation and outcomes of LOPPs over several planning cycles. This would involve assessing how well LOPP priorities align with actual project funding and implementation, evaluating changes in transportation infrastructure, and measuring the impact on community mobility and access.



## References

- Berechman, J., & Paaswell, R. E. (2005). Evaluation, prioritization and selection of transportation investment projects in New York City. *Transportation*, 32, 223-249.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-004-7271-x>
- Beria, P., Maltese, I., & Mariotti, I. (2011). Multicriteria versus Cost Benefit Analysis: a comparative perspective in the assessment of sustainable mobility. *European Transport Research Review*, 4, 137-152. doi:10.1007/s12544-012-0074-9
- Bond, A., Grant, M., Bauer, J., Miller, S., Bowen, B., Martin, L., & Giragosian, A. (2013). *Programming for Operations: MPO Examples of Prioritizing and Funding*. Washington D.C.: FHWA.  
<https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop13050/fhwahop13050.pdf>
- Broniewicz, E., & Ogrodnik, K. (2020). Multi-criteria analysis of transport infrastructure projects. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, 83, 102351.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2020.102351> (Broniewicz Multi-criteria analysis of transport infrastructure , p. 1)
- Copperman, R., Devlin, M., Ewalt, R., Lockhart, T., Peterson, K., Lambert, J., . . . Ferguson, W. (2004). Coordinating and prioritizing multimodal transportation projects. *Proceedings of the 2004 IEEE Systems and Information Engineering Design Symposium, 2004*, (pp. 113-119). Charlottesville, VA, USA. <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/1314670/>
- Deliali, A., Esenther, S., Frisard, C., Bolduc, M., Krevat, D., Goins, K. V., . . . Christofa, E. (2022). Incorporating Health-Related Criteria for Project Scoring in Massachusetts. *Transportation Research Record*, 2676(4), 90-106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/036119812111057050>
- Esmalian, A., Yuan, F., Rajput, A. A., Farahmand, H., Dong, S., Li, Q., . . . Mostafavi, A. (2022). Operationalizing resilience practices in transportation. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, 104, 103214. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2022.103214>
- Executive Order No. 12893. (n.d.). *Principles for Federal Infrastructure Investments*. 31 U.S.C. § 601.  
<https://www.archives.gov/files/federal-register/executive-orders/pdf/12893.pdf>
- FDOT. (2022a). *Work Program Instructions*. Tallahassee: FDOT.  
<https://fdotewp1.dot.state.fl.us/fmsupportapps/Documents/development/WorkProgramInstructions.pdf>
- FDOT. (2022b). *MPO Program Management Handbook*. Tallahassee.  
[https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/planning/policy/metrosupport/resources/2023-03-03-fdot-mpo-program-management-handbook-final.pdf?sfvrsn=783d5a7f\\_14](https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/planning/policy/metrosupport/resources/2023-03-03-fdot-mpo-program-management-handbook-final.pdf?sfvrsn=783d5a7f_14)
- Geedipally, S. R., Lord, D., & Reddy, G. R. (2011). Evaluation of Texas Department of Transportation Safety Improvement Index as a Prioritization Tool. *Transportation Research Record*, 2241(1), 39-50. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epdf/10.3141/2241-05>
- Gunasekera, K., Hirschman, I., & Brinckerhoff, P. (2014). *NCHRP 08-36, Task 112: Cross Mode Project Prioritization*. New York: AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning.  
[https://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36\(112\)\\_FR.pdf](https://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36(112)_FR.pdf)
- Guo, S. B., Jha, K., & Greeman, J. (2020). *Project Prioritization Practices and Methods*. College Station, TX: Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI).  
<https://static.tti.tamu.edu/tti.tamu.edu/documents/TTI-2020-3.pdf>

- Hardy, D., Bell, A., & McCahill, C. (2019). Accessibility Measurement for Project Prioritization in Virginia. *Transportation Research Record*, 2673(12), 266-276.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0361198119859319>
- Herbel, S., Meyer, M. D., Kleiner, B., & Gaines, D. (2009). *A Primer on Safety Performance Measures for the Transportation Planning Process*. Washington, DC: Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. <https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-06/fhwahep09043.pdf>
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. (n.d.). *H.R.2950*. 102nd Congress (1991-1992). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/2950>
- Jlayel, L. A., Ashrafi, K. A., Dahab, Y., & Manyang, D. (2022). Multi - Criteria Decision Analysis Tool for Capital Planning and Prioritization of WMATA Facilities and Assets. *2022 Systems and Information Engineering Design Symposium (SIEDS)*, (pp. 49-54). Charlottesville, VA, USA.  
<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9799407>
- Joshi, N. N., & Lambert, J. H. (2007). Equity Metrics With Risk, Performance, and Cost Objectives for the Prioritization of Transportation Projects. *IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT*, 54(3), 539-547. doi:10.1109/TEM.2007.900790
- Krapp, A., Barajas, J. M., & Wennink, A. (2021). Equity-Oriented Criteria for Project Prioritization in Regional Transportation Planning. *Transportation Research Record*, 2675(9), 182 - 195.  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/03611981211001072>
- Macharis, C., & Annalia Bernardini. (2015). Reviewing the use of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis for the evaluation of transport projects: Time for a multi-actor approach. *Transport Policy*, 37, 177-186.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2014.11.002>
- Major Capital Investment Projects . (2013). *49 CFR Part 611*. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-49/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-611>
- McCoy, K., Ingels, A., & Lyons, W. (2016). *STIP State of the Practice Review: Development and Use of Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs*. Washington D.C.: FHWA.  
<https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/12298>
- Metropolitan planning organization. (2022). Fla. Stat. § 339.175.  
[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0339/Sections/0339.175.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0339/Sections/0339.175.html)
- Metropolitan transportation planning. (2021). 49 U.S. Code § 5303.  
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/49/5303>
- Metropolitan transportation planning. 23 U.S. Code § 134. (2021).  
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/23/134>
- Meyer, M. D. (2016). *Transportation planning handbook / Institute of Transportation Engineers Fourth Edition* . Hoboken: Wiley.  
<https://users.pfw.edu/sahap/CE450%20Transport%20Policy%20and%20Planning/1.%20Lectures/Books,%20references,%20readings/Transportation%20Planning%20Handbook%20Forth%20Edition.pdf>
- North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority. (2023). *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Scoring Criteria* . NJTPA.org: <https://www.njtpa.org/TIPcriteria.aspx>

- Novak, D. C., Koliba, C., Zia, A., & Tucker, M. (2015). Evaluating the outcomes associated with an innovative change in a state-level transportation project prioritization process: A case study of Vermont. *Transport Policy*, 42, 130-143. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2015.05.021>
- Noyce, D., McCahill, C., Sundquist, E., & Chitturi, M. (2021). *Modern Project Prioritization for Transportation Investments*. Arlington, TX: Center for Transportation Equity, Decisions, and Dollars (CTEDD). <https://rosap.nhtl.bts.gov/view/dot/56131>
- Nuworsoo, C., Parks, K., & Deakin, E. (2006). Cost per User as Key Factor in Project Prioritization. *Transportation Research Record*, 154-161.
- Outwater, M. L., Adler, T., Dumont, J., Kitchen, M., & Bassok, A. (2012). Quantitative Approaches for Project Prioritization: Case Study in Puget Sound, Washington. *Transportation Research Record*, 2303(1), 108-116. <https://doi.org/10.3141/2303-12>
- Porras-Alvarado, J. D., Murphy, M. R., Wu, H., Han, Z., Zhang, Z., & Arellano, M. (2017). Analytical Hierarchy Process to Improve Project Prioritization in the Austin District, Texas. *Transportation Research Record*, 2613(1), 29-36. <https://doi.org/10.3141/2613-04>
- Project selection from the TIP. (n.d.). 23 CFR § 450.332. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/23/450.332>
- Rezvanian, A. Z., Peach, M., Thomas, A., Cruz, R., & Kemmsies, W. (2015). Benefit-Cost methodology for highway-railway grade crossing safety protocols as applied to transportation infrastructure project prioritization processes. *Transportation Research Procedia*, 8, 89-102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trpro.2015.06.045>
- Shelton, J., & Medina, M. (2010). Integrated Multiple-Criteria Decision-Making Method to Prioritize Transportation Projects. *Transportation Research Record*, 2174(1), 51-57. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epdf/10.3141/2174-08>
- Smart Growth America. (2019). *Prioritizing projects based on outcomes*. Washington D.C.: Smart Growth America. [https://smartgrowthamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Prioritizing-projects-based-on-outcome\\_FINAL.pdf](https://smartgrowthamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Prioritizing-projects-based-on-outcome_FINAL.pdf)
- Sperling, E., & Ross, C. (2018). Strategically Aligning Capital Improvement Prioritization to Performance Goals. *Transportation Research Record*, 2672(51), 68-78. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361198118787639>
- Virginia Department of Transportation. (2022). *SMART SCALE Policy Guide*. VDOT. [https://smartscale.org/documents/20171115/smart\\_scale\\_policy\\_guide\\_oct24\\_2017.pdf](https://smartscale.org/documents/20171115/smart_scale_policy_guide_oct24_2017.pdf)
- Wang, Z., Zhang, Z., Lu, J., & Zhao, J. (2012). Development of a Procedure for Prioritizing Intersection Improvement Projects Considering Safety and Operational Factors. *Journal of Transportation Safety & Security*, 4, 35-48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19439962.2011.614374>
- Williams, K., Boyd, T., Keita, Y., & Kramer, J. (2021). *Transportation Equity Toolkit*. Arlington, TX: Center for Transportation, Equity, Decisions, and Dollars (CTEDD) University of Texas, Arlington. <https://www.cutr.usf.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CTEDD-Transportation-Equity-Toolkit-04212021.pdf>
- Work program; legislative budget request; definitions; preparation, adoption, execution, and amendment. (2022). Fla. Stat. § 339.135. [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=0300-0399/0339/Sections/0339.135.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0300-0399/0339/Sections/0339.135.html)

## Survey version for MPO representatives:



Thank you for taking this survey on

### **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) List of Project Priorities (LOPP) Development Practices in Florida**

The information collected through this survey is critical to the successful completion of a larger research project funded by the Florida Department of Transportation and being conducted by researchers with the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida. This project seeks to identify the various practices and methodologies used by Florida's 27 MPOs to develop their LOPP and what characteristics of those LOPPs are most effective for clearly communicating MPO priorities to FDOT District Offices. The end result of this project will be a description of the current state of LOPP practice in Florida with a spotlight on noteworthy practices for LOPP development and suggestions for improved statewide practices related to LOPP development.

As a note: LOPP in this survey refers to an MPO's List of Project Priorities established in Florida statute (339.175(8)(a)). The MPO Program Management Handbook on the FDOT website refers to the same LOPP as the "List of Priority Projects" (section 5.3). Your MPO may have some other unique name for the LOPP, such as Priority Listing of Projects, Multimodal Priorities List, TPO Project Priorities, or Transportation Project Priority Lists. For the purposes of this survey and the broader research project, we are interested in information related to the document prepared by MPOs to convey project priorities to the FDOT ahead of the development of the Tentative Work Program irrespective of the name given to the document by individual MPOs.

If you have questions or comments about this survey or the research project, please contact Taylor Dinehart at [tdinehart@usf.edu](mailto:tdinehart@usf.edu) or Jeff Kramer at [kramer@usf.edu](mailto:kramer@usf.edu).

**General Information.** (Note: any personal identifying information you provide will remain confidential—used only for follow-up questions to clarify responses or to set-up an interview, if necessary.)

First Name [Text Entry]

Last Name [Text Entry]

What is your email address? [Text Entry]

What is the name of the MPO you represent? [Dropdown Menu]

Would you be willing to participate in a short interview if your organization is chosen for a case study?

- Yes
- No

Please upload the most recent List of Project Priority (LOPP) document that you sent to FDOT. [file attachment option]

---

**This set of questions aims at identifying the composition and type of information presented in your MPO's LOPP:**

1. Many MPOs throughout the state have different priority lists housed within their LOPP. The following options are in at least one Florida MPO LOPP. Which of these lists are in your LOPP? [Check all that apply]

- We do not have multiple lists; we provide one single consolidated project list in our LOPP.
- Aviation or Airport Project Priorities
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Priorities
- Bridge Project Priorities
- Complete Streets Project Priorities
- Congestion Management (CMP) Project Priorities
- Freight Project Priorities
- Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Project Priorities
- Local Initiatives Project Priorities
- Multimodal Project Priorities
- Non-Strategic Intermodal System (Non-SIS) Project Priorities
- Planning Studies Priorities
- Port Project Priorities
- Regional Project Priorities (i.e., spanning across MPOs; developed in coordination with a neighboring MPO)
- Resiliency Priorities
- Safety Priorities
- Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Project Priorities
- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- System Management, Traffic Operations, or TSM&O Project Priorities
- Trails Project Priorities
- Transit or Public Transportation Project Priorities
- Transportation Alternatives (TA) Project Priorities
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

- 1.a. *(Only shown to those who selected Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Projects in question 1)* You indicated that you have a list for “Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities” in your LOPP.

Please describe what Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project means for your MPO and how you determine whether projects fit into this category. [Text Entry]

1.b. *(Only shown to those who selected regional priorities in question 1)* You selected that you have a list of regional priorities that you include in the LOPP which are jointly created with another MPO. What led your MPO to create this list and how is it developed? [Text Entry]

1.c. *(Only shown to those who selected regional priorities in question 1)* Regarding regional project priorities, do you have any of the following listed in your LOPP? [Check all that apply]

- Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)
- Regional Trails
- Regional Multimodal
- Regional Roadway, Highway, or Capacity
- Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian
- A different list related to regional project priorities not presented here: (Please explain) [Text entry]

1.d. Are some projects represented on more than one list in the LOPP? (Select one option)

- Yes (Please explain) [Text entry]
- No
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

1.e. How would you describe how the different lists on your LOPP are organized: [Check all that apply]

- By program categories based on LRTP/MTP or other plans (e.g., Complete Streets, TSM&O, Congestion Management Process, etc.)
- By funding source or grant program
- By mode (e.g., Transit, Bike/Ped, Highway etc.) By county, town, or certain local areas
- By importance (e.g., Tier 1, Tier 2, etc.)
- By something else (Please explain) [Text entry]

*(For question 1.e. survey respondents are provided extra information when they hover over “project scoring criteria” and “Multicriteria Analysis (MCA).” For “project scoring criteria” they are shown the following: “A method of evaluating and scoring projects based on a set of predetermined factors such as safety, economic impact, congestion reduction, accessibility, etc. Usually, a point system or weight system is applied to the factors and projects are ranked by their final score.” For “Multicriteria Analysis (MCA)” they are shown the following: “A tool for comparing and ranking alternative transportation projects based on multiple objectives, such as cost, performance, environmental impact, social equity, and stakeholder preferences. The complexity of the analysis generally requires a tool or application.”)*

**This set of questions is meant to ascertain the processes and methodologies used by your MPO to develop the LOPP.**

2. Which method does your MPO use to evaluate projects for the LOPP? [Check all that apply]

- Cost-benefit analysis (CBA), cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA), or a similar cost-based processes for evaluating the efficiency of interventions.
- Project Scoring Criteria?
- Multicriteria analysis (MCA) (i.e., an algorithm such as AHP, TOPSIS, ANP, REGIME, ELECTRE, DEMATEL, PROMETHEE, etc.)?
- A process-based method (i.e., prioritization of projects happens through recommendations from a member implementing agency, a transportation commission, a board, or a committee, etc.)
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

2.a. *(Only shown to those who selected project scoring criteria in question 2)* How are your MPO's project scoring criteria applied to projects for selection into the LOPP? [Check all that apply]

- We have one set of criteria that we use for all projects.
- We use one set of criteria to evaluate multiple lists of projects in the LOPP.
- We use multiple sets of criteria to evaluate multiple lists of projects in the LOPP.
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

2.b. *(Only shown to those who selected project scoring criteria in question 2)* Which of these lists in your LOPP include projects selected using project scoring criteria? [Check all that apply.] *(Only options that were selected in question 1 by the respondent are shown to the respondent now.)*

- We do not have multiple lists; we provide one single consolidated project list in our LOPP.
- Aviation or Airport Project Priorities
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Priorities
- Bridge Project Priorities
- Complete Streets Project Priorities
- Congestion Management (CMP) Project Priorities
- Freight Project Priorities
- Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Project Priorities
- Local Initiatives Project Priorities
- Multimodal Project Priorities
- Non-Strategic Intermodal System (Non-SIS) Project Priorities
- Planning Studies Priorities
- Port Project Priorities
- Regional Project Priorities (i.e., spanning across MPOs; developed in coordination with a neighboring MPO)
- Resiliency Priorities
- Safety Priorities
- Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Project Priorities
- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- System Management, Traffic Operations, or TSM&O Project Priorities
- Trails Project Priorities
- Transit or Public Transportation Project Priorities

- Transportation Alternatives (TA) Project Priorities
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

2.c. *(Only shown to those who selected project scoring criteria in question 2)* Is the methodology for project scoring criteria available to your FDOT District and other stakeholders? [Check all that apply]

- No, the methodology is used internally only to prioritize projects; people outside of the MPO do not have access to our methodology.
- Yes, the methodology is in the LOPP that we send to our FDOT District.
- Yes, the methodology is in our TIP.
- Yes, the methodology is in our LRTP.
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

2.d. *(Only shown to those who selected Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) in question 2)* You indicated that your MPO uses a Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) tool. Which algorithm does your MPO use to evaluate projects? [Text entry]

2.e. *(Only shown to those who selected Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) in question 2)* Are the categories and weights used in the Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) algorithm available to your FDOT District and other stakeholders? [Check all that apply]

- No, the MCA algorithm is used internally only to prioritize projects; people outside of the MPO do not have access to our methodology.
- Yes, we share our MCA algorithm methodology with our FDOT District.
- Yes, we share our MCA algorithm methodology with stakeholders.
- Yes, we share our MCA algorithm methodology with the public.
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

**This set of questions is about how your MPO communicates project priorities to FDOT.**

3. When you submit the LOPP to your FDOT District, does the document include: [check all that apply]

- A list in which the topmost projects on the list represent higher priority and the lower projects represent lower priority (i.e., the relative position on the list indicates prioritization).
- A number rank for each project in each list.
- If there are multiple lists, a method that allows FDOT to identify which projects across all lists are the MPOs overall top priorities.
- All projects listed in a table format with additional information about each project such as project sponsor, category, location, description, type, performance measures, phases, costs, funding source, etc.
- Different types of tables with varying information depending on which priority list the project is on.
- An explanation of the methodology or rationale for selecting and ranking projects.
- A section dedicated to regional project priorities.
- Projects from past LOPPs that are now fully funded (for informational purposes).
- Other projects for informational purposes only. (Please explain)



- Other non-project items. (Please explain) [Text entry]

3.a. (Only shown to those who selected “a method that allows FDOT to identify which projects across all lists are the MPOs overall top priorities” in question 3) You indicated that you have a method of displaying your project priorities in the LOPP which allows FDOT to identify which projects across all lists are the MPOs overall top priorities. Which method do you use? [Check all that apply]

- A separate list for the MPO’s overall top priorities which may include projects
- from each individual list. (In this scenario some projects are listed twice—once on their respective program list and possibly once on the overall top priority list).
- Notation within the separate lists (stars, highlights, etc.)
- Some other method. (Please explain) [Text entry]

4. Some MPOs maintain a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases through completion. Does your MPO provide this type of information in the LOPP?

- Yes
- No

4.a. Do you think maintaining a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases has any impact on your ability to advance other projects?

- Yes (Please explain) [Text entry]
- No (Please explain) [Text entry]

4.b. Do you think not maintaining a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases has any impact on your ability to advance other projects?

- Yes (Please explain) [Text entry]
- No (Please explain) [Text entry]

5. How does your MPO communicate with FDOT during the development of your LOPP? [Check all that apply]

- We don’t—not during the development of the LOPP By phone
- On a virtual platform such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, etc.
- By Email
- In person
- As part of a regularly scheduled MPO committee meeting
- As part of a meeting scheduled specifically for the purpose of discussing the development of the LOPP
- We have a staff member who is tasked with working with FDOT during the development of the LOPP
- Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

6. Does your MPO engage with your FDOT District **during** development of the Tentative Work Program to ensure that the items in the LOPP are represented to the maximum extent possible?

- Yes

- No

6.a. *(Only shown to those who selected yes in question 6)* You indicated that your MPO engages with your FDOT district during the development of the Tentative Work Program to ensure that the items in the LOPP are represented to the maximum extent possible. How does your MPO accomplish this? [Text entry]

7. How does your MPO engage with your FDOT District **after** the development of the Tentative Work Program to understand how your LOPP was used? [Text entry]

8. If your MPO has had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, do you believe this is because the LOPP effectively communicated priorities or for some other reason? Please explain. [Text entry]

9. If your MPO has not had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, what do you think is the reason for this? [Text entry]

**This final set of questions is meant to uncover insight you might have into ways to improve the LOPP process.**

10. What are some perceived barriers to developing a successful LOPP for your MPO? [Text entry]

11. Has your MPO made changes to the LOPP development approach over the years (format, criteria, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

11.a. *(Only shown to those who selected yes in question 11)* You indicated that your MPO has made changes to the LOPP development approach over the years. What improved after the changes were made? [Text entry]

12. In your opinion, is there enough FDOT involvement at the District Office and Central Office level in the development of your MPO's LOPP?

	Not enough involvement	The right amount of involvement	Too much involvement
District Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Central Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your answers will help capture the current state of LOPP development in Florida and reveal a path forward for improvement.

If you have questions or comments about the survey or overall research project, please write to Taylor Dinehart [tdinehart@usf.edu](mailto:tdinehart@usf.edu) and Jeff Kramer [kramer@usf.edu](mailto:kramer@usf.edu). If you would like to go back and check any of your answers, this is the time to do it. Otherwise, click submit to exit this survey.

Powered by Qualtrics

## Survey version for FDOT District representatives



Thank you for taking this survey on

### **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) List of Project Priorities (LOPP) Development Practices in Florida**

The information collected through this survey is critical to the successful completion of a larger research project funded by the Florida Department of Transportation and being conducted by researchers with the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida. This project seeks to identify the various practices and methodologies used by Florida's 27 MPOs to develop their LOPP and what characteristics of those LOPPs are most effective for clearly communicating MPO priorities to FDOT District Offices. The end result of this project will be a description of the current state of LOPP practice in Florida with a spotlight on noteworthy practices for LOPP development and suggestions for improved statewide practices related to LOPP development.

As a note: LOPP in this survey refers to an MPO's List of Project Priorities established in Florida statute (339.175(8)(a)). The MPO Program Management Handbook on the FDOT website refers to the same LOPP as the "List of Priority Projects" (section 5.3). For the purposes of this survey and the broader research project, we are interested in information related to the document prepared by MPOs to convey project priorities to the FDOT ahead of the development of the Tentative Work Program irrespective of the name given to the document by individual MPOs.

If you have questions or comments about this survey or the research project, please contact Taylor Dinehart at [tdinehart@usf.edu](mailto:tdinehart@usf.edu) or Jeff Kramer at [kramer@usf.edu](mailto:kramer@usf.edu).

**General Information.** (Note: any personal identifying information you provide will remain confidential—used only for follow-up questions to clarify responses if necessary.)

First Name [Text Entry]

Last Name [Text Entry]

Email address [Text Entry]

Phone number [Text Entry]

Which FDOT District do you represent? [Dropdown Menu]

1. What process does your District follow for considering/synthesizing/integrating MPO priorities during the development of the Tentative Work Program? [Text entry]
2. Is there any difference between how the priorities of TMA vs. non-TMA MPOs are considered in the development of the programming process?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not applicable to my District
- 2.a *(Only shown to those who selected yes in question 2)* You indicated that the dynamics are different for how priorities for TMA vs. non-TMA MPOs are considered in the development of the programming process. Please explain the difference. [Text entry]
3. How does your District engage with MPOs during the development of their LOPPs? [Check all that apply]
  - We don't—not during the development of the LOPP
  - By phone
  - On a virtual platform such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, etc.
  - By Email
  - In person
  - As part of a regularly scheduled MPO committee meeting
  - As part of a meeting scheduled specifically for the purpose of discussing the development of the LOPP
  - We have a staff member who is tasked with working with FDOT during the development of the LOPP
  - Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]
4. How does your District engage with MPOs during the development of the Tentative Work Program (after the LOPPs have been submitted)? [Check all that apply]
  - We don't—not during the development of the Tentative Work Program
  - By phone
  - On a virtual platform such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, etc.
  - By Email
  - In person
  - As part of a regularly scheduled MPO committee meeting
  - As part of a meeting scheduled specifically for the purpose of discussing the development of the TWP
  - We have a staff member who is tasked with working with FDOT during the development of the TWP
  - Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

5. When MPOs include regional priorities on their priority list (meaning a priority list that was jointly created with neighboring MPOs in which priorities are shared by the MPOs) how are the priorities on those lists handled by your District?
- We tend to give regional priorities more emphasis—meaning they are more likely to receive funding.
  - We tend to give regional priorities less emphasis—meaning they are less likely to receive funding.
  - We treat regional and local priorities the same—there is no risk or benefit to including regional priorities.
  - Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]
6. Has there been confusion over MPO priorities in the past?
- Yes
  - No
- 6.a. *(Only shown to those who selected yes in question 6)* You indicated that there has been confusion over MPO priorities in the past. What characteristics of the LOPP were unclear or confusing? [Text entry]
7. What characteristics or practices in the LOPP are most useful for FDOT to understand what is important to the MPO? [Text entry]
8. Is there an LOPP you received or have seen in another District that is particularly clear and useful?
- Yes
  - No
- 8.a. *(Only shown to those who selected yes in question 8)* Which MPO developed that LOPP? (If you would like to select multiple MPOs hold down the CTRL button as you make your selections.) [Dropdown menu with all Florida MPOs available for selection]
- 8.b. *(This question is customized depending on which Florida MPO(s) were chosen in the dropdown menu in question 8.a. For every Florida MPO chosen, question 8.b. is repeated with the specific Florida MPO's shown in the prompt.)* What about the [Florida MPO selected in 8.a.] LOPP did you find most valuable? [Text entry]
9. If there is an issue of clarity regarding the LOPP during the development of the Tentative Work Program, does your District reach out for clarification or explanation?
- Yes
  - No
  - Other: (Please explain) [Text entry]

10. Developing the Tentative Work Program is a complex process and the top priorities for all MPOs don't always get funded. How does your FDOT District communicate with MPOs regarding what was done with their LOPP and why the top priority/priorities were not funded? [Text entry]

11. If, during the development of the Tentative Work Program, an MPO brings it to the district's attention that there was a misunderstanding or some confusion around what the MPO's top priority/priorities were, what does the District then do to resolve that miscommunication? [Text entry]

12. Has the District ever reconsidered project funding based on communication with an MPO following completion of the Tentative Work Program?

- Yes
- No

12.a. *(Only shown to those who selected yes in question 12)* In the above scenario, did the district reconsider project funding as a result of a miscommunication over project priorities as expressed in the LOPP?

- Yes
- No. It was something else. (Please explain) [Text entry]

13. What technique (perhaps one you have not seen before) would you suggest to an MPO to improve communication between the MPO and the FDOT regarding their project priorities as expressed in the LOPP? [Text entry]

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your answers will help capture the current state of LOPP development in Florida and reveal a path forward for improvement.

If you have questions or comments about the survey or overall research project, please write to Taylor Dinehart [tdinehart@usf.edu](mailto:tdinehart@usf.edu) and Jeff Kramer [kramer@usf.edu](mailto:kramer@usf.edu).

If you would like to go back and check any of your answers, this is the time to do it. Otherwise, click next to exit this survey.

Powered by Qualtrics

## Appendix B – Survey Results

### Survey Results from MPO Representatives

1. Many MPOs throughout the state have different priority lists housed within their LOPP. The following options are in at least one Florida MPO LOPP. Which of these lists are in your LOPP? (Check all that apply)

Field	Choice Count
We do not have multiple lists; we provide one single consolidated project list in our LOPP	3
Port Project Priorities	4
Resiliency Priorities	4
Bridge Project Priorities	5
Freight Project Priorities	7
Local Initiatives Project Priorities	7
Regional Project Priorities	7
Surface Transportation Program (STP)	7
Other: (Please explain)	8
Aviation or Airport Project Priorities	9
Complete Streets Project Priorities	10
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Project Priorities	10
System Management, Traffic Operations, or TSM&O Project Priorities	10
Multimodal Project Priorities	11
Safety Priorities	11
Trails Project Priorities	11
Congestion Management (CMP) Project Priorities	12
Non-Strategic Intermodal System (Non-SIS) Project Priorities	12
Planning Studies Priorities	13
Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Project Priorities	15
Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Priorities	17
Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities	18
Transit or Public Transportation Project Priorities	18
Transportation Alternatives (TA) Project Priorities	19

#### Text entries from respondent that chose “Other”

- "Transportation System Priorities (federal and state-funded priorities other than FTP SIS priorities and box-funded Transit Development Plan implementation priorities)"
- Some of these overlap and are not reflective of the exact names. Our LoPP has the following Lists: Strategic Intermodal System, Regionally Significant (most closely resembles the Highway, Roadway, Capacity Projects), TSMO, Bicycle & Pedestrian (intent is to focus on administering

the TA), SUN Trails (non SUN Trails projects are incorporated into Bike/Ped List), Planning/Studies, Grant Funded (Projects municipalities are planning to apply for a US DOT Grant), State Safety Improvements (projects such as upcoming RRRs we would like the state to take extra steps into incorporating safety improvements in and/or we are willing to put our federal funding on adding additional safety improvements)

- LOPP does not have individual lists, rather categories. CMP is embedded throughout, not a separate category
- SCOP, SCRAP
- Master List
- See Figure 7 (p.24) of our PPL: <https://metroplanorlando.org/wp-content/uploads/Prioritized-Project-List-PPL-2028-2038-Adopted-7-12-23.pdf#page=24>
- We have a multimodal priority list that includes most all of the above items, but we also have a TA priority list for smaller dollar bike/ped/trail projects. So we have two priority lists.
- SUN Trail Projects, TRIP Eligible Projects

**1.a. You indicated that you have a list for “Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities” in your LOPP. Please describe what Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project means for your MPO and how you determine whether projects fit into this category.**

- Capacity/roadway widening projects from our LRTP Cost Feasible Plan.
- Increases in capacity
- Typically capacity or facility-enhancement projects that are identified in our LRTP or other studies.
- These are typically new construction and road widening projects. We also include roundabout priorities in this category.
- Projects are identified in the LRTP-CFP in 5-yr planning period increments, specifically Table 6-3 FDOT Other Roads Projects and Local Roadway Projects and 6-4 Partially funded projects
- Capacity/roadway widening projects from our LRTP Cost Feasible Plan.
- These projects are identified in the LRTP and carried forward into each LOPP.
- Non-SIS facilities only (SIS projects are on a separate list). This list is mostly capacity projects but also includes Complete Streets projects.
- Highway Capacity projects
- Widening projects, major intersection projects (it may be an overpass, DDI, CFI etc.) and bridge projects. These are projects seeking state and/or federal funding that are larger in size (money and complexity) as the smaller roadway projects, like a turn lane or safety project would be put on the multi-modal project list.
- This category includes capacity projects, a road re-alignment, grade separation at RR crossing, pedestrian improvements, resurfacing and signal projects.
- "State Highway System / State Roads Project List: This list of multimodal projects includes roadway widening, Complete Streets, TSM&O, pedestrian and bicycle, and safety improvements on the State Highway System.
- Off-System Construction Assistance/TRIP List: Ten percent from Other Arterial Funds are allocated to the Construction and CEI costs of regionally significant Off-State Highway System



projects. List also includes projects identified for Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funds."

- Our MPO has an LOPP Survey Development Tool (listed as a noteworthy practice by FHWA and FTA in the current Federal Certification) that requires project submittals per specific criteria. One grouping in the LOPP survey tool is for capacity improvements, including roadway, highway, bridge, etc. These are submitted by our partner agencies, including FDOT, Florida's Turnpike, municipal partners, and County. In addition, our MPO convenes the TIP Development Committee weekly during the development of each annual update to the TIP, in which projects submitted in the LOPP Survey Development tool are reviewed by all partner agency representatives to ensure planning consistency and interagency coordination.
- Typically refers to major roadway projects where lanes are added or major interchange projects
- We have a Non-SIS Capacity priorities list. This list includes state and local (off-system) capacity projects. This includes widening and/or new roadway connection projects.
- Capacity/roadway widening projects from our LRTP Cost Feasible Plan.
- These are projects mostly non-SIS projects on the state roadways that use state funding (mostly District Dedicated Revenue). However, they sometimes use the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding.
- New roads or road widenings. Typically State Highways (non-SIS) type projects. Some are local projects, i.e., TRIP/CIGP.
- Widening, increased throughout, and segment lengthening of new roadways. As determined by project applications submitted by jurisdictions,
- We refer to it as "Regionally Significant". They are capacity projects, major corridor improvements, complete streets, intersection improvements, etc.

**1.b. You selected that you have a list of regional priorities that you include in the LOPP which are jointly created with another MPO. What led your MPO to create this list and how is it developed?**

- We have a joint list of regional project priorities with our neighboring MPOs Lee County MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO. These regional priority lists were created for projects that have impacts on both counties and include projects that require additional regional coordination and discussion amongst both MPOs. Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO meets jointly with the Sarasota/Manatee and Lee County MPO to discuss regional project priorities and determine priority rankings. This additional level of coordination demonstrates a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) planning process and opens up opportunities to leverage additional various categories of funding sources that require a collaborative approach such as TRIP funding.
- Projects on this list must be eligible for TRIP and are submitted to the Treasure Coast Transportation Council (TCTC) for regional prioritization. TCTC is comprised of the Indian River MPO, St. Lucie TPO, and Martin MPO.
- We do joint Transportation Regional Incentive Program lists with both the MPO's north and south of us (Collier and Charlotte-Punta Gorda). We did this to go after TRIP funds when that program was created. The list of projects that we develop with Collier is prioritized based on criteria that was jointly developed. The list that we do with Charlotte-Punta Gorda is developed

less formally and is essentially you get one I get one except that the number one priority is always a Burnt Store Road priority based on prior Joint Board direction.

- Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA) coordination. See more: <https://metroplanorlando.org/board-committees/central-florida-mpo-alliance/>
- The regional component takes into consideration the Regional Transportation Plan, collaboratively developed by Miami-Dade TPO, Broward MPO, and Palm Beach TPA. This includes the convening of quarterly SEFTC meeting to vote and adopt regional TRIP funds. The SEFTC approved TRIP projects are included in each annual LOPP submitted to FDOT and other transportation partners.
- Based on the LRTP, and County's CIP. Discussions with the County led to the project. Looking for construction ready projects in the time frame FDOT has funding available.

**1.c. Regarding regional project priorities, do you have any of the following listed in your LOPP?**

Field	Choice Count
Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)	7
Regional Trails	4
Regional Multimodal	4
Regional Roadway, Highway, or Capacity	4
Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian	2
A different list related to regional project priorities not presented here: (Please explain)	1

**Text entries from respondent that chose “A different list related to regional project priorities not presented here: (Please explain)”**

- Given our multi-county study area (region), all of our state/federal funded projects are considered "regional" priorities.

**1.d. Are some projects represented on more than one list in the LOPP?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes (Please explain)	8
No	17
Other: (Please explain)	0

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Yes (Please explain)”**

- Some projects may be in multiple lists. We have an overall Top 20 list and sub-lists which may include the same project.
- Some trail projects are shown on two lists based on the type of funding we're requesting, i.e., transportation alternative, SUN Trail, or TMA SU funds.
- We have a TOP 20 List made up of projects from all the lists

- There have been projects that are on multiple lists as they are going after different pots of money, such as SUN Trail funds but might also receive SU funds. Also, for instance, Burnt Store Road is on regional and our federal and state funded priority list.
- TRIP, SUN Trail
- Bike/Ped and SUN Trail, if appropriate TRIP list with Non SIS and Traffic Ops/Safety/Local Initiatives
- Highways and TRIP may overlap
- Roadway projects could also land on our TRIP and/or SIS list

**1.e. How would you describe how the different lists on your LOPP are organized: (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
By program categories based on LRTP/MTP or other plans (e.g., Complete Streets, TSM&O, Congestion Management Process, etc.)	13
By funding source or grant program	11
By mode (e.g., Transit, Bike/Ped, Highway etc.)	12
By county, town, or certain local areas	0
By importance (e.g., Tier 1, Tier 2, etc.)	6
By something else (Please explain):	3

**Text entries from respondent that chose “By something else (Please explain):”**

- FTP SIS; Transit; and Transportation System (federal and state funds not allocated to the SIS and transit block grants)
- By mode and the type of improvement. Also an overall Top 20 list.
- LOPP is prioritized by categories

**2. Which method does your MPO use to evaluate projects for the LOPP? (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA), cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA), or a similar cost-based processes for evaluating the efficiency of interventions.	2
Project Scoring Criteria?	18
Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) (i.e., an algorithm such as AHP, TOPSIS, ANP, REGIME, ELECTRE, DEMATEL, PROMETHEE, etc.)?	1
A process-based method (i.e., prioritization of projects happens through recommendations from a member implementing agency, a transportation commission, a board, or a committee, etc.)	19
Other: (Please explain)	5

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- FTP SIS, LRTP and TDP priorities

- Method used: Our MPO’s LOPP Survey Development Tool. We focus on our community needs based off of Board priorities, while also ensuring Federal , local, and State consistency.
- Some of our priorities are so old (legacy projects) the scoring and ranking doesn't apply anymore, e.g., project partially completed PD&E or Design in need of ROW or CST.
- Two-step process: basic eligibility identified in plans adopted by reference in LRTP. 2nd step - ranking by committees to establish order of priority based on scoring criteria that is identified in plans
- Projects are categorized according to what performance measures they can improve. The performance measures are mostly the federally required measures, although we also use a measure of multimodal access for walk, bike, and bus projects and a V/C measure for capacity projects. The projects are listed in order of their potential effect on a performance measure, with good repair coming first, then safety, then travel time reliability, then multimodal access.

**2.a. How are your MPO’s project scoring criteria applied to projects for selection into the LOPP? (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
We have one set of criteria that we use for all projects.	2
We use one set of criteria to evaluate multiple lists of projects in the LOPP.	1
We use multiple sets of criteria to evaluate multiple lists of projects in the LOPP.	14
Other: (Please explain)	0

**2.b. Which of these lists in your LOPP include projects selected using project scoring criteria? (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
Aviation or Airport Project Priorities	1
Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Priorities	9
Bridge Project Priorities	1
Complete Streets Project Priorities	5
Congestion Management (CMP) Project Priorities	7
Freight Project Priorities	1
Highway, Roadway, or Capacity Project Priorities	9
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Project Priorities	5
Local Initiatives Project Priorities	5
Multimodal Project Priorities	5
Non-Strategic Intermodal System (Non-SIS) Project Priorities	5
Planning Studies Priorities	5
Port Project Priorities	2
Regional Project Priorities (i.e., spanning across MPOs; developed in coordination with a neighboring MPO)	3
Resiliency Priorities	2

Field	Choice Count
Safety Priorities	5
Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Project Priorities	5
Surface Transportation Program (STP)	5
System Management, Traffic Operations, or TSM&O Project Priorities	6
Trails Project Priorities	5
Transit or Public Transportation Project Priorities	3
Transportation Alternatives (TA) Project Priorities	12
We do not have multiple lists; we provide one single consolidated project list in our LOPP	0
Other: (Please explain)	2

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- State Safety is not ranked
- We have a set of criteria for awarding Complete Streets funding to projects, criteria for safety projects, criteria for trail overpasses/crossings, and criteria for adding projects to the multimodal list.

**2.c. Is the methodology for project scoring criteria available to your FDOT District and other stakeholders? [Check all that apply]**

Field	Choice Count
No, the methodology is used internally only to prioritize projects; people outside of the MPO do not have access to our methodology.	0
Yes, the methodology is in the LOPP that we send to our FDOT District.	4
Yes, the methodology is in our TIP.	7
Yes, the methodology is in our LRTP.	6
Other: (Please explain)	10

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- Methodology provided to FDOT during Call for Projects
- The methodology is explained in a PowerPoint presentation that is presented to the MPO, Advisory Committees, and Public Workshops.
- Criteria/Methodology is published on our website, reviewed each year via a Call for Projects Kick-Off Meeting, and presented to our Board/Committee during presentations involving the LoPP
- The scoring methodology was reviewed by all MPO committees and adopted by our MPO Board. It is made available to stakeholders who use the scoring methodology to score their projects. The methodology will be included in our LRTP.
- The methodology is explained in a PowerPoint presentation that is presented to the MPO, Advisory Committees, and Public Workshops.

- The methodology is shared with our local government partners and FDOT, as well as our regional partners, but it's not transmitted with the LOPP.
- SIS and Non-SIS project scoring methodology is in the LRTP, Traffic Ops, Bike/Ped and Planning Studies methodology is contained in the project applications for these categories
- Methodology is in the annual call for projects

**2.d. You indicated that your MPO uses a Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) tool. Which algorithm does your MPO use to evaluate projects?**

- Included in Supplement B of our PPL: <https://metroplanorlando.org/wp-content/uploads/Prioritized-Project-List-PPL-2028-2038-Adopted-7-12-23.pdf#page=53>

**2.e. Are the categories and weights used in the Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) algorithm available to your FDOT District and other stakeholders?**

Field	Choice Count
No, the MCA algorithm is used internally only to prioritize projects; people outside of the MPO do not have access to our methodology.	0
Yes, we share our MCA algorithm methodology with our FDOT District.	1
Yes, we share our MCA algorithm methodology with stakeholders.	1
Yes, we share our MCA algorithm methodology with the public.	1
Other: (Please explain)	0

**3. When you submit the LOPP to your FDOT District, does the document include: (check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
A list in which the topmost projects on the list represent higher priority and the lower projects represent lower priority (i.e., the relative position on the list indicates prioritization).	19
A number rank for each project in each list.	27
If there are multiple lists, a method that allows FDOT to identify which projects across all lists are the MPOs overall top priorities.	7
All projects listed in a table format with additional information about each project such as project sponsor, category, location, description, type, performance measures, phases, costs, funding source, etc.	17
Different types of tables with varying information depending on which priority list the project is on.	10
An explanation of the methodology or rationale for selecting and ranking projects.	5
A section dedicated to regional project priorities.	6
Projects from past LOPPs that are now fully funded (for informational purposes).	15
Other projects for informational purposes only. (Please explain)	3
Other non-project items. (Please explain)	1

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other projects for informational purposes only. (Please explain)”**

- We request funding requests to other agencies, apart from FDOT, with the adoption of the LOPP.

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other non-project items. (Please explain)”**

- This includes planning funds, corridor studies, model household surveys, etc.

**3.a. You indicated that you have a method of displaying your project priorities in the LOPP which allows FDOT to identify which projects across all lists are the MPOs’ overall top priorities. Which method do you use? (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
A separate list for the MPO’s overall top priorities which may include projects from each individual list. (In this scenario some projects are listed twice—once on their respective program list and possibly once on the overall top priority list).	2
Notation within the separate lists (stars, highlights, etc.)	2
Some other method. (Please explain)	4

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Some other method. (Please explain)”**

- The projects are grouped in priority order.
- Pretty simple. The first table or list of projects are the highest priorities.
- Projects are moved to the Master List, regardless of mode, if they are a top priority
- MPO staff prepares a funding plan and submits to FDOT considering top MPO priorities and funding availability.

**4. Some MPOs maintain a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases through completion. Does your MPO provide this type of information in the LOPP?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	27
No	1

**4.a. Do you think maintaining a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases has any impact on your ability to advance other projects?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes (Please explain)	13
No (Please explain)	14

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Yes (Please explain)”**

- Only limited amount to fund the project priorities for each funding category.

- We have a greater understanding for grant/ear mark funding
- Projects with only design funding programmed in FDOT's Five Year Work Program typically require additional coordination with FDOT to get subsequent phases of production programmed.
- High-cost projects encumber the bulk of available funding until completion.
- helps us track the project through until completed
- Our primary region-wide list is capped at 20 projects, therefore, the ability to move a project to the status list allows the ability to introduce new projects to the region-wide list
- Our District strongly suggested keeping all projects on the LOPP until construction/letting. We have projects on the LOPP that have received multiple deferrals as well. Keeping them on the list informs FDOT of priority despite changes to schedule, funding, etc.
- We want to show that projects on the LOPP do get funded
- Maintaining a project's priority status until it is fully funded for construction allows us to track project status and allows MPO staff to provide accurate project information to stakeholders and coordinate with Pasco Project Management regarding grant funding opportunities.
- Our LOPP procedure focuses on "completing what we started." So, we include projects on our LOPP until they are funded through construction. I think that there are many factors that impact our ability to advance projects but feel keeping them on the LOPP is just being good stewards to ensure our investment into the projects get the projects to completion.

**Text entries from respondent that chose "No (Please explain)"**

- We don't remove the project until it is complete (built/operating). We seem to have plenty of success advancing new projects into the pipeline.
- Partially funded projects are maintained on the Transportation System and Transit priority lists. It is FDOT's discretion of what to fund.
- Because these are multi-year, multi-phase projects, they stay on the LOPP for many years. FDOT has been able to successfully fund multiple projects every year.
- No, the lack of funding is what keeps us from advancing to other projects
- The projects we refer to in this question require funding allocations from different agencies over multiple years. Furthermore, the LOPP informs elected officials of the status of ongoing programming of priority projects.
- Maintaining the programmed projects on the list serves as a reference for how much funding is going towards priorities. There isn't a negative impact on other projects. Also - cost estimates change so funding may go up/down or move to different years.
- We've been doing it for years. Many time FDOT will not fund the subsequent phase or fund another project. So, it causes us problems trying to promote a "priority" of the MPO when FDOT will not program it. This is one reason you need to be careful with scoring and ranking projects. A few years of this occurring, and you have lower score projects advancing ahead of higher score projects.
- Leaving a project on the list is helpful, for instances when a project gets deferred. It is much harder to put a project back on the list if this happens rather than adjusting the funding timeframe
- FDOT needs projects in a variety of phases to efficiently program them



**4.b. Do you think not maintaining a project’s priority status on the LOPP until it is funded for all phases has any impact on your ability to advance other projects?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes (Please explain)	0
No (Please explain)	1

**Text entries from respondent that chose “No (Please explain)”**

- Project readiness, available funding and open communication with FDOT affect programming outcomes more than project ranking on a list. For example, small projects can sometimes be moved up quickly as may projects that are eligible for certain types of funds that become available.

**5. How does your MPO communicate with FDOT during the development of your LOPP? (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
We don’t—not during the development of the LOPP	0
By phone	19
On a virtual platform such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, etc.	18
By Email	24
In person	20
As part of a regularly scheduled MPO committee meeting	25
As part of a meeting scheduled specifically for the purpose of discussing the development of the LOPP	16
We have a staff member who is tasked with working with FDOT during the development of the LOPP	14
Other: (Please explain)	2

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- Weekly MPO/FDOT staff coordination meetings. Our MPO has an outstanding working relationship with our FDOT District.
- As part of a standing monthly meeting to coordinate between the District and MPO staff on topics du jour.

**6. Does your MPO engage with your FDOT District during development of the Tentative Work Program to ensure that the items in the LOPP are represented to the maximum extent possible?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	26
No	2

**6.a. You indicated that your MPO engages with your FDOT district during the development of the Tentative Work Program to ensure that the items in the LOPP are represented to the maximum extent possible. How does your MPO accomplish this?**

- A meeting with the FDOT District to present the adopted priorities to them for their consideration in developing the Tentative Work Program.
- We meet weekly to discuss directions,
- Typically, one meeting to review LOPPs prior to District initiating the WP cycle. Sporadic communication during the WP cycle.
- Through coordination with the assigned District Liaison
- Our community liaison knows our priorities well, has already discussed them with me and has frequent communications with local agency staff and the MPO during the programming phase.
- A meeting with the FDOT District to present the adopted priorities to them for their consideration in developing the Tentative Work Program.
- the MPO reviews the draft Tentative Work Program and forwards review comments to FDOT for consideration/reconsideration of projects
- Please refer to the answer to #5 above. The MPO engages and coordinates with our district office to work through and maximize the funding capabilities of our MPO.
- Our FDOT District schedules two meetings with us annually, post-LOPP adoption, to go over the LOPP with Work Program staff, and then later to review how Work Program staff has responded to the priorities. The second meeting is before the public release of the Tentative.
- Informal channels, such as phone calls
- Intake meetings after submittal of the adopted LOPP
- Through our meetings and discussions with our liaison and our local office.
- By phone and via email.
- By developing an intake funding plan and follow-up coordination with FDOT work program staff.
- All of the above.
- The strength of our partnership with our district makes engagement really easy. Our district is involved from the outset of the LOPP development process resulting in project priorities aligning prior to LOPP development. Active engagement early between our district, the MPO and our member counties ensures that LOPP projects are funded every year.
- The district invites the Director to attend an annual meeting to review the LOPP and discuss the work program process. In these meetings, projects are highlighted and discussed, including changes and areas of emphasis.
- A meeting with the FDOT District to present the adopted priorities to them for their consideration in developing the Tentative Work Program.
- We have weekly check-in meetings with our District Planning Office. However, we don't receive draft reports as the funding is getting put into the Tentative Work Program. We are hoping to work with FDOT in the future.
- We hold a formal meeting to go over our LOPP with Work Program staff before they assemble the new work program.

- MPO staff meets virtually with district staff to review our MPO's LOPP priorities and discuss project funding and phasing details.
- They call a meeting to discuss our priorities, and we do so. It seems the MPO's rationale behind some of our priorities doesn't make it to the people actually programming projects and phases in the work program. High profile, SIS projects in particular, seem to advance in the work program, while our other state arterials (non-SIS) highways dwell in the work program for decades in some cases.
- We have email exchanges and meetings with the work program team to identify/coordinate projects for implementation based on available funding type and amount during the work program development cycle. Once projects are identified for implementation, we have project intake meetings with FDOT and the sponsoring agencies to discuss schedule, costs, expectations, and any other information needed for either party. Additionally, following submittal of the LOPP to the District, a separate meeting is held with the District Secretary and FDOT staff to discuss the LOPP and identify higher priority projects.
- Weekly coordination calls with FDOT and specific outreach targeted at work program staff. Continued difficulty getting projects programmed and advancing once early phases have been completed.
- We complete a funding table provided to us from our district and hold multiple meetings with FDOT during the development of both the funding table and work program. We also meet with the district secretary to discuss our LOPP.
- Same as the answers to Question 5

**7. How does your MPO engage with your FDOT District after the development of the Tentative Work Program to understand how your LOPP was used?**

- The Tentative Work Program is available for public review and presented for acceptance to the MPO. We will review the Tentative Work Program with the LOPP and see which priorities are funded. It is understood not all priorities can be funded because of the cost and revenue available.
- Again, weekly meetings
- No
- Through coordination with the assigned District Liaison
- We discuss what got programmed, what did not and why, usually by phone call or Teams meeting.
- The district reviews the draft tentative with us and together we compare it to the priorities we've adopted and transmitted. They explain whenever a priority is skipped over and there's usually a pretty good reason.
- Communication occurs monthly at a minimum during a virtual meeting with our district partners including our Government Liaison. Additionally, we are usually in contact with our FDOT partners at least once per week.
- We ask our advisory committees and board to consider sending a letter of comment that staff drafts about the Tentative.
- Discussions with district staff and presentation to the TAC

- Analysis of TWP presentation to the Board
- During the review of the tentative work program and providing comments and questions from that.
- By phone and via email and subsequently FDOT staff present the Draft Tentative Work Program at the MPO advisory committee and Board meetings. At the meetings FDOT staff discuss how the LOPP projects are incorporated into the Work Program.
- We have monthly coordination meetings with FDOT staff.
- We have annual partnering meetings that are scheduled after the local endorsement of the Tentative Work Program, which also coincides with our kickoff of the TIP development committee. During these meetings we review what was funded and where we can partner to resolve unfunded needs.
- Again, the strength of our partnership with our district makes this process different from others. Because we engage from the outset and jointly determine before the Tentative Work Program cycle what projects are going to be funded, we already know what the Work Program will include.
- None presently. During the Work Program presentation of the Tentative Program, they highlight/reference projects and where they are ranked on our LOPP.
- The Governing Board submits a letter to the district on our endorsement and changes to the Tentative Work Program.
- FDOT does a report-out to our committees and board about what projects were selected from the LOPP in the upcoming Work Program.
- MPO staff has informal conversations regarding FDOT rationale for including LOPP projects in the Work Program. If a project on the priority list is not funded, we discuss reasons they were not funded. MPO staff does not formally meet with FDOT staff to discuss the rationale behind FDOT decisions regarding how the LOPP was incorporated into the FDOT Work Program.
- The district presents the tentative work program to the MPO committees and board and highlights projects that have moved into the work program from the priority list.
- Weekly coordination calls
- FDOT presents the Work Program to our Board/Committees.
- It is reflected in the DTWP

**8. If your MPO has had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, do you believe this is because the LOPP effectively communicated priorities or for some other reason? Please explain.**

- Yes. FDOT Urban Liaison is very involved in the LOPP from beginning to the end.
- We believe it is effective, the district is still gaining understanding over time.
- N/A
- When it comes to the SU Box, SUN Trail, Freight priorities, and TRIP funds, we have been quite successful because a) we have an exceptionally dedicated MPO liaison and b) we are clear about where our priorities come from - that they originate with the LRTP-CFP and its associated plans, and we communicate this to our Board, to our advisory committees and to FDOT as the annual LOPP is developed, vetted and approved.

- I believe we have a very good relationship with our district, built through regular monthly coordination meetings and other forms of communication in the interim. The LOPP is clear and very much follows our policy direction and vision, and when the district understands all that context, it is very helpful.
- The sample size of funded projects is too small to evaluate
- The LOPP does effectively communicate priorities; however, discussion with FDOT on how to maximize funding resources occurs as well.
- 1. Receptive and collaborative district staff and 2. Regular coordination meetings between MPO and District staff
- Yes. Projects in the LOPP stay listed in the LOPP for many years. With year-to-year consistency in the LOPP provides FDOT effective guidance on programming projects.
- We submit a TOP 20 project list to FDOT. One prioritized list.
- Yes, the process of developing priorities starts in January with the development of preliminary priorities that are given to FDOT by March 1st for their review, questions etc. which allows for a lot of communication prior to adoption in June by the Board.
- Yes, our MPO has had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded. Our MPO LOPP clearly indicates the top priorities of the Board, and FDOT staff attends the Board meetings where the projects are discussed. In addition, MPO staff makes every effort to educate Board members on the MPO process and encourages them to attend the MPOAC Weekend Institute.
- Our priorities are well defined, and we regularly communicate with FDOT work program and LAP.
- Yes.
- The LOPP effectively communicates our priorities, but it is the partnership and consistent engagement with our district that ensures success in our region. The LOPP merely documents those priorities.
- Having stability in the LOPP is very important in getting funds, FDOT does not have to worry about funding an early phase of a project only to have that project pulled from the LOPP.
- Yes. Larger projects are funded in segments to facilitate funding and take advantage of funding opportunities. Based on FDOT guidance, our MPO will prioritize lower cost projects. Safety is the highest weighted criteria in the project prioritization process.
- I feel the priority list is the list, there are different ways of doing this.... The real key is how they are presented to the MPO Board and then communicated to FDOT through e-mails, letters, meetings etc. Communication between the different offices of FDOT is important as well - planning with work program, etc. If FDOT is not engaged with the MPO, it is more likely the MPO priorities will not be programmed.
- I believe our success has come from the discussions and coordination with the district following the submittal of the LOPP. The district is very receptive in this coordination and making sure they have a understanding of how the priorities are presented in the LOPP.
- Yes, with ongoing and consistent with the department. This could also be approved upon with consistent project updates provided by FDOT.
- I think it is the LOPP, the funding table, and our communication efforts and project advocacy by MPO staff.

- In addition to the effectively-communicated priorities, the MPO's close coordination with all of the local governments results in the MPO area being an easier and desired area for the district to implement a project.

**9. If your MPO has not had success in getting top priorities from the LOPP funded, what do you think is the reason for this?**

- Cost and limited revenue.
- Primary issue is lack of funding for non-SIS facilities.
- Lack of funding
- We have far less success obtaining funding for Highway Capacity projects that were assigned OA funding under the LRTP-CFP. Why this is the case has never been adequately explained, other than the revenue projections for OA have been too high and have been adjusted downward for the 2050 LRTP.
- Cost and limited revenue.
- Aside from limited funding availability, it's hard to tell
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- Not applicable
- Not applicable
- We have had consistent success in getting projects funded.
- Cost and limited revenue.
- It can be difficult to balance District and State needs with TPA priorities on the state system. There are a lot of priorities "competing" for funding.
- N/A
- See above and simply there are instances where FDOT does not agree with the MPO priority.
- Lack of coordination and transparency in department decision making process.
- Lack of available funds and competing district priorities.
- Lack of funding

**10. What are some perceived barriers to developing a successful LOPP for your MPO?**

- The length of the capacity project is to be completed from PDE, Design, ROW, and Construction. Funding. Understanding of the public that projects do not happen overnight.
- Communication
- No issues with the development of LOPPs.
- The perception that funding for projects is limited to new 5th year and that not very many projects will get funded.
- See response to #9.
- Getting all the project information and applications in from the local governments with cost estimates.
- short range system operation needs versus long-range transportation capacity priorities; emphasis on long-range capacity enhancement

- There does not exist perceived barriers from our perspective as our MPO is fortunate to have a Board that represents two counties and three cities that are forward thinking and very cooperative in working together.
- Huge -- nearly insurmountable -- unfunded needs. Political pressure to subsidize new development at the expense of development that went before and never had its needs met, disregarding performance measure data. Extremely complicated paths to putting together funding packages, causing decision makers to throw up their hands. Inequality between highway and transit projects in terms of local match -- even for regionally significant projects. Lack of transparency in the District Modal Office's programming decisions.
- N/A
- Poor project applications from our member governments. Lack of information to help in the prioritization process.
- Projects dragging on and on forever, the perception that there is plenty of money out there for widening projects (new federal bill) and project cost increases that, once bid, are far higher than Engineer's cost estimate.
- N/A
- Changes in decision makers and local agency staff.
- LOPP depends on the accuracy and level of commitment on behalf of the implementing agency. When implementing agencies shift their project schedules and/or change priorities, this impacts the LOPP process.
- No barriers.
- Lack of local understanding of the role of the LOPP. We have too many projects that are more long-term or likely not feasible to fund through the Work Program. This creates frustration at times locally when no movement or funding of projects occur. There is a tendency to view the LOPP in the same manner as the LRTP Cost Feasible or Unfunded Needs lists. Our LOPP is too large in general.
- Unknown funding allocations for state roadways. It varies year to year. Would be good to understand upcoming FDOT needs that may use the same funding source as TPA state priorities.
- The time involved in the LOPP process. Applications for projects from parties that are not implementers, etc.
- Our MPO Board has the ability to move projects on the LOPP after projects are scored and ranked using the MPO's scoring methodology. The MPO does not have a formal process of removing projects that are not funded over several years.
- Due to the lack of funding, along with high expectations and pressure from local governments MPO's priority lists are getting larger and larger. It may be a slight exaggeration, but the annual priority lists are becoming the LRTP. I guess what I mean here is the priority lists are not as focused as they use to be. They are getting too big.
- We have some policies that make it difficult to re-rank projects from year to year if priorities have changed. For example, we have a policy that protects the top 5 ranked SIS and Non-SIS projects on the list until they are fully funded and completed. Since these are usually high dollar projects, they don't move quickly and since they are "protected" on the list, it is difficult to convey new or shifting needs/priorities of the MPO.

- The way our list is developed is because "that is the way it has always been done." It would be helpful to understand how other MPO's develop their LOPPs and pros/cons of their methods and the success they have had in moving projects.
- Excessive project submittals from local jurisdictions and ever-changing priorities.
- Over the last 3 years we have really worked on developing our methodology and tweaking it to where it makes the most sense for our local partners. Each year we are provided feedback and work to make it even more clear. I think that we tackle barriers and have for the most part overcome them. One barrier may be to maintain consistency year to year as Board members change due to elections and such and new projects are added.

**11. Has your MPO made changes to the LOPP development approach over the years (format, criteria, etc.)?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	25
No	3

**11.a. You indicated that your MPO has made changes to the LOPP development approach over the years. What improved after changes were made?**

- LRTP cycles have different requirements every five years. Last cycle we incorporated Complete Streets with Corridor Management Plans. Resiliency will be a topic during the next LRTP cycle.
- Organizational and ease to read
- Primarily format changes to clearly and concisely communicate project status and cost to complete.
- improvements helped expand our list of projects and our subsequent tracking of them: we expanded our LOPP to include Freight, Safety and Planning priorities and added columns to report on phase/funding in the Work Program, FPNs, whether a project appears in the SIS-CFP, what year it was first prioritized.
- We simplified the list in recent years at the request of the Department. We have a call for projects each year and have limited the number of projects that any single local government can submit. We've established a threshold for TA project priorities (under \$3M).
- The MPO has revised its priorities per the FDOT District's request/guidance. It's too soon to evaluate if there is any improvement
- Clarity and evaluation criteria that is based on available data.
- The amount of time to review and discuss the LOPP was significantly reduced from prior years.
- More focus on/ funding for projects that improve Safety performance measures and State of Good Repair.
- Added CMP data to each project.
- The changes have been driven by criteria and new funding categories. I would not classify all of the changes to be improvements though.
- Organizing projects by funding source/grant program.



- 2018: implemented MCA for federally funded priorities. 2020: as part of the 2045 MTP adoption, we updated evaluation criteria consistent with the adopted plan. 2022: we incorporated new funding programs and updated data for the MCA data model. 2023: we rebranded the document to improve transparency and readability."
- Our MPO has significantly enhanced the multi-agency coordination process with the implementation of the LOPP Survey Development Tool. This was highlighted as a noteworthy practice by FHWA and FTA in the Federal Certification review of 2023.
- More success in getting projects funded.
- The development of multiple lists have been beneficial. This approach helps ensure smaller projects, projects that are multimodal receive priority as well. Generating multiple lists also helps create more of a menu of options for FDOT to look review.
- We continue to update the messaging of the LOPP every year. We have historically put an anticipating programming amount for state funds but have started to move away from that. FDOT and the TPA have also struggled on keeping our formula (SU and CARU) funding on non-state roadways as we originally intended.
- We moved from a board selected process to a formal, quantifiable scoring process that can be replicated by anyone.
- There is now a formal process to objectively score, rank, and prioritize projects. Only two tables, a multimodal list and a TA list, are included in the LOPP. Larger cost nonmotorized projects were moved from the TA list to the multimodal list.
- After meeting with FDOT management, we broke up several of our large (\$\$\$) highway widenings into smaller project limits and scope. This seemed to have a slight impact (improvement).
- New categories, updated scoring, new formatting.
- We developed a consistent quantitative ranking that not only helped rank the project, but also provided more project information on how the project impacts federal and local emphasis areas such as safety, resiliency, multimobility, innovation, tourism, and more.
- Improved clarity and included additional information

**12. In your opinion, is there enough FDOT involvement at the District Office and Central Office level in the development of your MPO's LOPP?**

	Not enough involvement	The right amount of involvement	Too much involvement
District Office	3	24	0
Central Office	12	11	1

## Survey Results from FDOT District Representatives

Note: For some districts more than one representative responded to the survey, but now all survey respondents answered every question. Therefore, while there are 7 districts represented, for many questions there are more than 7 responses.

### 1. What process does your district follow for considering/synthesizing/integrating MPO priorities during the development of the Tentative Work Program?

- MPOs submit their List of Priority Projects which will identify which projects they are interested in funding by priority; based on various funding sources (capacity, safety, transportation alternative).
  - 2) Discussions are held with MPO staff identifying any obstacles in pursuing prioritized projects and changes which may need to happen based on those obstacles.
  - 3) Prioritized projects are moved through the Work Program cycle for the Draft Tentative selection process.
- By developing it with MPO's and local governments going from the bottom up to develop.
- FDOT, local governments and the MPO work together to identify projects for consideration in the MPO's LOPP. From the LOPP, FDOT and MPO staff work to develop a plan to spend SU funding.
- MPO Liaisons participate throughout the development of the PPLs and relay pertinent information to the MPOs. The district holds meetings with each MPO to discuss their priorities. MPO staff can provide additional input as well as receive an update from FDOT concerning the upcoming Work Program development cycle.
- Constant communication and face to face meetings prior to building the work program.
- Our district requests a draft LOPP to be submitted by March 1. The projects on the LOPP are then vetted by our "Scoping Refinement Team" (SRT) to ensure the projects are program ready and determine what phase of the projects are needed and should be programmed first (i.e.: feasibility, design, ROW, etc.). As the planning manager I work directly with our work program team from February until the DTWP is produced (October or December depending on the Legislative cycle) to ensure the new priorities are programmed in the new 5th year of the work program and the future phases of projects already in the system are programmed/moving forward.
- After the MPO develops their LOPP and before Work Program development, a discussion meeting is held for MPO Executive Director, District Executive Staff and District Work Program staff to discuss the development of the LOPP and any additional project specific comments that should be taken into consideration for planning.
- Gathering all information on projects needed to move forward in the next fiscal year(s).
- We use the MPO LOPP to fund projects with SU/TA funds. We go down each list until the funds are fully used on eligible projects.
- Our district has developed a detailed schedule for integrating MPO LOPPs with our five-year TWP. The current schedule details tasks starting in June 2023 and runs until April 2024. Each district Government Liaison is responsible for setting up coordination meetings with MPO and

district (liaison/work program) staff. These meetings are timed within the scheduled flow of the overall TWP schedule to ensure we get feedback and then provide results at key moments in the process. The first of four meetings is on Teams and allows the MPO staff an opportunity to provide details on their priorities in August. This is done well after each MPO approved their LOPP and coordination and details have been shared throughout their process. The second meeting is October via Teams and highlights priorities that were funded from the current LOPP. The final two events are in-person presentations to each of the MPOs key committees (CAC, TAC, BPAC, etc.) and then to their board, all at the end of October / beginning of November.

**2. Is there any difference between how the priorities of TMA vs. non-TMA MPOs are considered in the development of the programming process?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	3
No	5
Not applicable in my district	2

**2.a You indicated that the dynamics are different for how priorities for TMA vs. non-TMA MPOs are considered in the development of the programming process. Please explain the difference.**

- The only difference of note is when an MPO within a TMA applies for TMA specific funding (TRIP, etc.).
- For Non-TMA MPO's without dedicated funding, FDOT will program from their LOPP with no additional coordination.
- Priorities to be funded with SU funds are given a more thorough review so that the district may follow the MPOs priorities as closely as possible.

**3. How does your district engage with MPOs during the development of their LOPPs? (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
We don't—not during the development of the LOPP	0
By phone	7
On a virtual platform such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, etc.	6
By Email	6
In person	8
As part of a regularly scheduled MPO committee meeting	6
As part of a meeting scheduled specifically for the purpose of discussing the development of the LOPP	7
We have a staff member who is tasked with working with FDOT during the development of the LOPP	4
Other: (Please explain)	3

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- Communication is constant with our MPOs through the district MPO liaisons. The LOPP or any other issues are open for communication at any time.
- Throughout the year, we have recurring monthly or weekly meetings (depending on the MPO) to discuss many topics, one of which can be their LOPP.
- Coordination is year-round continuous.

**4. How does your district engage with MPOs during the development of the Tentative Work Program (after the LOPPs have been submitted)? (Check all that apply)**

Field	Choice Count
We don't—not during the development of the LOPP	0
By phone	7
On a virtual platform such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, etc.	8
By Email	6
In person	8
As part of a regularly scheduled MPO committee meeting	6
As part of a meeting scheduled specifically for the purpose of discussing the development of the LOPP	6
We have a staff member who is tasked with working with FDOT during the development of the LOPP	5
Other: (Please explain)	2

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- Again, regular communication exists between the MPO and the district MPO Liaisons. Any issue or concern is open for communication.
- We vet the projects submitted on the LOPP and provide feedback. We also coordinate regularly and share what the programming is looking like and what projects have cost increases and when necessary, provide the MPOs with options of what projects can get funded and what projects may need to move or get deferred.

**5. When MPOs include regional priorities on their priority list (meaning a priority list that was jointly created with neighboring MPOs in which priorities are shared by the MPOs) how are the priorities on those lists handled by your district?**

Field	Choice Count
We tend to give regional priorities more emphasis—meaning they are more likely to receive funding.	1
We tend to give regional priorities less emphasis—meaning they are less likely to receive funding	0
We treat regional and local priorities the same—there is no risk or benefit to including regional priorities.	5
Other: (Please explain)	3

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- They are treated as a local priority but also have the benefit of pursuing TRIP funding
- Regional projects are funded based on funding availability. For instance, TRIP funding may not be available in the year the project is ready to "receive" the funding. Also, if the funding needs a local match, we need to ensure the locals (or the MPO if using federal funds as the match) have the needed funding in the year the TRIP funds are available.
- N.A. No neighboring MPOs, the NFTPO a regional MPO.

**6. Has there been confusion over MPO priorities in the past?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	2
No	8

**6.a. You indicated that there has been confusion over MPO priorities in the past. What characteristics of the LOPP were unclear or confusing?**

- Recurring issue of current year priorities may not be following year's priorities.2) Multiple groupings of priority lists are prepared by the MPOs (TA, Capacity, TRIP). Projects maybe selected in certain groups by availability of certain funding categories which dilutes how the projects are prioritized.
- When MPOs have multiple programs or lists and each program/list has a number 1 priority, which is the true number one priority? Some of our MPOs have 3 - 6 programs (i.e.: Complete Streets, Local Initiatives, Roadway/Major Projects) on their LOPP that each have a number 1 priority.

**7. What characteristics or practices in the LOPP are most useful for FDOT to understand what is important to the MPO?**

- We consider the MPO's ranking to be most significant
- The need for details concerning funding eligibility, project details, and other details that are not readily obvious from reading the simple list.
- Constant communication.
- Planning Periods to know how far out a project is and what projects are coming up soon.
- 1) A clear method for communities to identify and maintain their priorities UNTIL THE PROJECT IS COMPLETED. Not just the completion of a phase of work (PE, ROW, etc.).2) Include FPID numbers in the LOPP when possible.
- Through various meetings where in-depth discussions take place from each of the local governments and agencies participating in the creation of the LOPP you are able to get an understanding of the projects that are most important to the group individually and as a whole.
- Maintain similar project order/priority.....don't have project order vary drastically from year to year (especially if early phases have been programmed). Clear/concise project description; showing the phases of the project; what outreach has been done (i.e.: scope, cost estimates, resolutions received by the MPO).

- Project type, location and problem the project will solve. This allows us to know what the MPO sees as a priority project type and work with them to develop projects that meet these goals.
- The MPO limits the number of projects on the LOPP. Therefore, all are a high priority.
- Consistency from year to year allows the Department to better plan for the development of projects and corridors.

**8. Is there an LOPP you received or have seen in another district that is particularly clear and useful?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	5
No	7

**Which MPO developed that LOPP? (If you would like to select multiple MPOs hold down the CTRL button as you make your selections.) What about this LOPP did you find most valuable?**

- Broward MPO - While they have multiple programs within their LOPP/MMPL (Multimodal Priority List), the programs are color-coded, they provide the FM number if available, what items have been received/reviewed (scope of work, resolution, cost estimate, partner collaboration), funding needed.
- North Florida TPO - Clear and concise ranking of their importance equally divided among the four counties the MPO serves
- Pasco County MPO - A simple list that does not include various layers that details are unknown about.
- Polk TPO - Inclusion of FPID numbers on projects where applicable.

**9. If there is an issue of clarity regarding the LOPP during the development of the Tentative Work Program, does your district reach out for clarification or explanation?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	9
No	0
Other: (Please explain)	1

**Text entries from respondent that chose “Other: (Please explain)”**

- FDOT is integrated in the development of the LOPP (likely FDOT planning prepared the project scope at the request of local government).

**10. Developing the Tentative Work Program is a complex process and the top priorities for all MPOs don’t always get funded. How does your district communicate with MPOs regarding what was done with their LOPP and why the top priority/priorities were not funded?**

- We have a meeting with each MPO to discuss which projects are funded

- A Teams meeting is done with staff in October to review funded priorities and solicit early feedback. In-person presentations are then scheduled for Oct/Nov to present funded priorities and solicit official feedback.
- Through face to face meetings.
- Weekly meetings and coordination between parties help us stay on the same page at all times.
- Regular communication lines.
- A strong relationship between the MPO Liaisons (District) and the staff of the MPO throughout the whole process
- We discuss with MPO staff during the development and then prepare a presentation for Committee and Board meetings to detail/highlight what was funded in the 5-year program (showing the priority number).
- We hold 2 meetings with the MPOs during the WP development process. The first meeting is to hear from the MPO what their expectations for priority projects are and get clarification on project goals. The second meeting is to go over what was funded from the priority list and receive feedback.
- Funding in the tentative work program is discussed with and approved by the MPO prior to programming. Release of the work program is basically a back check of what was approved.
- The District Work Program staff presents the Tentative Work Program to each MPO. In advance of that meeting FDOT staff discuss the Tentative program with MPO staff.

**11. If, during the development of the Tentative Work Program, an MPO brings it to the district's attention that there was a misunderstanding or some confusion around what the MPO's top priority/priorities were, what does the district then do to resolve that miscommunication?**

- Further meeting/discussion with the MPO and if there is an opportunity to rectify the situation then we would do so. There may be additional funding available for that particular project. If another funding stream wasn't available, then there may not be a recourse for this. This scenario would be highly unlikely because of the initial meetings and ongoing conversations that happen. There is plenty of opportunities for clarification before miscommunication could affect outcomes.
- The district staff and MPO staff shouldn't have a misunderstanding concerning the top priorities if they are clearly ranked and discussions concerning such projects are had when needed.
- Meet with the MPO and discuss solutions in an effort to resolve.
- If the issue is not a small discrepancy and cannot be solved internally, we result to amendments or modifications.
- If we can make an adjustment, we do. If we are past the point of being able to make the adjustment we will pursue the project in future work program cycles or we flag that project in-case additional funding becomes available during the FY.
- I have personally not encountered this issue as everyone is involved and communication is constant from the beginning
- If timing allows and funding is available, we make the necessary changes. Or if it is in an outer year, we make a note and make the changes during the next cycle.
- We have many conversations with our MPOs and 2 formal meetings with the MPO staff during the WP development process. This has alleviated this challenge for us.

- Adjust the work program in the next cycle.
- Fortunately, our district has not had this issue. However, in the event there were miscommunications I am confident FDOT and MPO staff could work together to address the issue.

**12. Has the district ever reconsidered project funding based on communication with an MPO following completion of the Tentative Work Program?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	8
No	2

**12.a. In the above scenario, did the district reconsider project funding as a result of a miscommunication over project priorities as expressed in the LOPP?**

Field	Choice Count
Yes	2
No. It was something else. (Please explain)	6

**Text entries from respondent that chose “No. It was something else. (Please explain)”**

- Most likely, new funding became available that shifted MPOs priorities.
- Changes could take place for other reasons outside of miscommunication.
- Locals identified the desire for the project by financially partnering to keep the project in a specific FY.
- Development changed the need for the project.
- It related to the level of funding that was to be applied to a specific priority.

**13. What technique (perhaps one you have not seen before) would you suggest to an MPO to improve communication between the MPO and the FDOT regarding their project priorities as expressed in the LOPP?**

- The ongoing communication between the district and MPOs has greatly improved communication. This includes meetings and emails
- Clear and free communication between staff when questions arise. Ensuring an understanding of the projects and asking questions when needed, conducting field reviews out in the areas of each project, continued coordination between staff can help limit issues.
- We have quarterly meetings with the MPO directors to keep open communication. This is different from the monthly MPO meetings.
- In all honesty, coordinating with the MPO is something that takes place on a weekly basis. Although there may be a few things we could improve, we exchange information fluently and there isn't much to render or modify immediately.
- 1) MPO needs to identify which projects are highest priorities. MPO Liaisons will advocate for funding opportunities. 2) Talk to your MPO Liaison. 3) Keep in mind that funding is limited.



- Attending all LOPP progression meetings so everyone has a full understanding from the beginning and various check in meetings throughout the process to keep on the same page.
- Simple best practice...include the FM number in the LOPP (if they exist).
- Frequent communication is key. When we all understand what the project's goals are, we can better work together to fund the project. It is important for the MPO to understand their role as well. If they give us a priority list of good projects, we will do all we can to fund them regardless of the funding type.
- FDOT should work closely with the local governments and MPO to scope projects being considered for LOPP inclusion.
- The communication from our MPOs in D3 is excellent. If anything, I would suggest FDOT improve our communication with the MPOs during the Tentative Work Program development cycle. This time of year, is very fast paced and fluid, but some level of updates to the MPOs would be greatly appreciated.

## Appendix C – Interview Scripts

### **MPO REPRESENTATIVE BASE INTERVIEW SCRIPT FOR METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) LIST OF PROJECT PRIORITIES (LOPP) DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN FLORIDA**

#### Introduction:

I am Jeff Kramer with the Center for Urban Transportation Research, and I am conducting this interview with you today as part of a study on metropolitan planning organization (MPO) list of project priorities (LOPP) development practices in Florida funded by the Florida Department of Transportation.

The information you share with me today will help in the development of 1 of 4 case studies that will be included in the final research report. Please feel free to share your thoughts openly, anything that seems sensitive or not suitable to be included in this report will not be shared outside of our research team.

#### Interview Questions

##### **Topic 1: General organizational/programmatic performance.**

1. How did it go this year?
2. Were your top priorities funded?
3. How does this compare to previous years? If different, do you know why?

##### **Topic 2: Communication and coordination with FDOT personnel.**

4. You indicated in the survey several methods for coordinating with FDOT during the development of the LOPP and during the programming cycle. Please describe those mechanisms to us in a little more detail.
5. Who at FDOT do you communicate with most (what position)?
6. Do you ever communicate with FDOT *Work Program staff* during the development of the LOPP and/or the Tentative Work Program?
7. Have staff changes at either the MPO or FDOT impacted communication between the two agencies during LOPP/WP/TIP development?
  - a. If not, were mechanisms in place to avoid issues?
  - b. If so, what steps were taken to improve communication?
8. Have you experienced communication issues/confusion between FDOT and the MPO related to project priorities? Was the situation addressed and how?

##### **Topic 3: The LOPP development process.**

9. Does the MPO provide a detailed LOPP schedule so that the public, member governments, the board, and FDOT so they can understand what phase of development the LOPP is at any given time?
10. Public participation – when / and how often in the process do you involve the public? Have you made changes to the LOPP based on public comments? Do you get a lot of public comments? Has public comment made an impact?
11. Does your MPO provide committees and the board with a draft LOPP for review and comments/consideration prior to asking for final approval? When does that happen?
12. Has the MPO experienced issues related to LOPP development resulting from MPO Board turnover? Are there any mechanisms in place to try to prevent this type of issue?
13. Do you think the MPO board understands the importance of the LOPP and its intended purpose?
14. When is the final board approval and why?

**Topic 4: Communication and coordination with member governments.**

15. Do you have a call for projects?
  - a. Is it general or for a specific type of project? (e.g., Forward Pinellas asks for complete streets projects.)
  - b. How is the notice provided?
  - c. Do you have a form?
- d. Is there guidance or criteria that explains how projects will be evaluated/ranked?
16. What can be done to improve the quality of applications from member governments (both within and beyond the MPO's control)?
17. What steps has your MPO taken to improve the quality of applications?
18. Do you provide support (technical, etc.) to member governments?

**Topic 5: The project prioritization process.**

19. Describe the screening and prioritization process. Is there weight assigned to certain factors? Who does this? Prioritization in the LRTP vs. LOPP. Are there common criteria?
20. Does the MPO's prioritization process take into account the local government's/sponsoring agency's willingness to provide funding?
21. Do all proposed/screened projects get included in the LOPP or is there a cut off?
22. Are transit, trail and other non-highway projects prioritized differently? Does the project type affect prioritization and if it does how do you expect those projects to get funded?
23. Does the MPO ever highly prioritize projects (or project phases) that are not on state facilities? Does this impact the likelihood of the project being programmed?
24. How does the MPO treat "regional" priorities in its LOPP?

25. Does the cost of a project ever impact the placement of that project on the priority list or even keep it off the LOPP?

**Topic 6: Programming**

26. What has been the issue when the MPO's top priorities have not been programmed, in your experience?

- a) Have those issues persisted over time, leaving projects on the LOPP for several programming cycles?
- b) Has the MPO attempted to address whatever obstacles existed that prevented specific projects from being programmed?

c) Was the project ultimately removed from the LOPP?

27. Has the MPO had projects programmed that were on the LOPP, but were not high priorities? Describe the communication between the MPO and FDOT on those projects?

28. In your experience, what impact does moving project priorities (rank) up or down on the MPO priority list from year to year have on project programming?

29. How do you manage board member or member government expectations for LOPP treatment by FDOT? Do board members/member governments/public understand the process?

30. In the survey, some MPOs noted difficulty getting projects programmed and advanced once early phases have been completed. Do you find that to be true for your MPO?

**Final Question: If you could change something in the LOPP/programming process to improve communication and/or outcomes, what would it be?**

Closing:

Thank you for your time. If later, you think of more information that you think would be helpful for their research project or if you have any questions, you can reach me by phone or email at [kramer@usf.edu](mailto:kramer@usf.edu) and [813-974-1397](tel:813-974-1397)

**FDOT DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE BASE INTERVIEW SCRIPT FOR METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) LIST OF PROJECT PRIORITIES (LOPP)  
DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN FLORIDA**

Introduction:

I am Jeff Kramer with the Center for Urban Transportation Research, and I am conducting this interview with you today as part of a study on metropolitan planning organization (MPO) list of project priorities (LOPP) development practices in Florida funded by the Florida Department of Transportation.

The information you share with me today will help in the development of 1 of 4 MPO case studies that will be included in the final research report. Please feel free to share your thoughts openly, anything that seems sensitive or not suitable to be included in this report will not be shared outside of our research team.

Interview Questions

**Topic 1: Communication and Coordination between FDOT and MPOs**

1. How involved is your district in LOPP development?
  - a. Is this true of each MPO in your District or are you more involved with some and not others?
  - b. How often do you meet with MPO staff about the LOPP? (Survey responses from MPOs and other FDOT Districts about MPO-District communication ranged from weekly communication to a single meeting presenting what happened after decisions were made. Where do you think your District/MPO falls on this range?)
2. Does FDOT have access to/understanding of the MPOs' LOPP scoring criteria/prioritization process? Would that be helpful for FDOT or is it more information than is needed?

**Topic 2: Understanding and Utilizing MPO Prioritization**

3. As the MPO is developing the LOPP and/or once it is final, do you understand why the MPO prioritized projects the way they did, and can you tell which projects on their list are their top priorities?
4. Some MPOs have multiple lists. What do you think about that?
  - a. When is that useful? (For instance, later when money becomes available.)
  - b. Some MPOs have a top 20 list within the LOPP, some have a funding plan (percentages), and some have other ways to indicate overall prioritization across lists. Is that helpful?
5. How do District planning staff convey what they understand about the MPOs' LOPP to work program staff?

- a. Does the MPO staff get an opportunity to talk to the work program staff before/during/as part of the process?
6. There are MPOs in the state that have been told by their District that they have project category lists or tables in their LOPP that the District does not look at or when making programming decisions. What is your take on this?

### **Topic 3: Programming and Funding**

7. Does your District consider LOPP priorities for all forms of funding or only for specific funds that are dedicated to the urbanized area (such as SU or TA)?
8. Some MPOs indicated that their larger, more expensive projects don't get programmed even though they are their top priority, yet smaller projects get funded even though they are lower priority. Does the cost of a project have more of an impact on the potential for programming than ranking/priority number?
9. If a local jurisdiction is willing to provide local funding for a project, is it more likely to be included in the TWP?
10. If an MPO has prioritized a lower cost, non-capacity project, (i.e., bike path, landscaping, lighting, non-capacity improvement) and it aligns with the District's schedule for a maintenance or resurfacing project do you use that opportunity during programming to do both?
  - a. Do you share with the MPO the cycle/scheduling for these types of projects?
11. How does the District treat regional priorities compared to the individual priorities of MPOs?
12. Has the Grant Application Process (GAP) had an effect on the programming process?
13. Does your District encourage MPOs to maintain a priority in the LOPP on the same project through all project phases?
  - a. Some MPOs have highly prioritized projects that don't receive funding during the programming process and remain part of the LOPP for several years. How do projects like these get treated during programming?
  - b. In some cases, these projects have had early phases completed but there is difficulty getting later phases programmed. Is this an issue and does it influence programming decisions?
14. How do you convey the treatment of the LOPP in the work program back to the MPO?
15. In the survey, some MPOs noted a disconnect between FDOT and MPOs on priorities in terms of what is worth funding—for instance with short range system operation needs versus long-range transportation capacity priorities or highway and non-highway projects. Have you noticed this in your District?
16. What is the #1 reason highly ranks projects on the LOPP don't get funded?

### **Topic 3: Staff Turnover and Training**

17. Has there been turnover of MPO staff that work with the District on issues related to programming? (LOPP, MPO priorities, tentative work program development, etc.)
  - a. If so, what impact has this had on the programming process? (The LOPP, understanding how it is to be used, tentative work program development.)

18. Has there been turnover of MPO staff that work with the District on issues related to programming? (LOPP, MPO priorities, tentative work program development, etc.)
  - a. If so, what impact has that had?
19. Does FDOT provide training to new staff involved in the programming process?
  - a. How often is this training provided?
  - b. What does that training consist of?
  - c. Does it address the MPO LOPP specifically?

**Topic 4: Case Study MPO**

20. Is there anything you would like to say specifically about *CASE STUDY MPO?*

Closing:

Thank you for your time. If later, you think of more information that you think would be helpful for their research project or if you have any questions, you can reach me by phone or email at [kramer@usf.edu](mailto:kramer@usf.edu) and [813-974-1397](tel:813-974-1397)