

TDP Handbook

FDOT Guidance for Preparing & Reviewing Transit Development Plans

Version III, 2018





TDP Handbook

FDOT Guidance for Preparing & Reviewing Transit Development Plans

Version III

October 2018

Prepared by

Tindale Oliver - Part I: TDP Preparer's Guide

Center for Urban Transportation Research - Part II: TDP Reviewer's Guide

Prepared for

Gabrielle Mathews

Chris A. Wiglesworth

Florida Department of Transportation Transit Office

605 Suwannee Street, MS 26

Tallahassee, FL 32399

(850) 414-4532

chris.wiglesworth@dot.state.fl.us



Table of Contents

Part I: FDOT Guidance for Preparing Transit Development Plans

Chapter 1: Introduction & Purpose	1
Chapter 2: Transit Development Plan Process	9
Chapter 3: Plan Development	18
Chapter 4: Annual Progress Report	91

Part II: FDOT Guidance for Reviewing Transit Development Plans

TDP Reviewer's Guide	100
----------------------------	-----

Appendices

Appendix A: TDP Rule	110
Appendix B: Public Involvement Toolbox	114
Appendix C: Key Resources	125

Acknowledgements

The Public Transit Office of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) would like to thank the members of the TDP Handbook Update Statewide Working Group for their participation/input.

Statewide Working Group

Michelle Arnold, CAT

Angela Bradley, Bay County TPO

Steve Diez, Hernando/Citrus MPO

Steve Feigenbaum, HART

Brian Freeman, Indian River MPO

Dave Hope, LakeXpress

Claudette Mahon, MARTY

Tomeka Monterville, LYNX

Valerie Neilson, Palm Beach TPA

Ken Odom, Ocala/Marion TPO

Geanelly Reveron, JTA

Greg Slay, Capital Region TPA

Greg Stuart, Broward MPO

Gabrielle Mathews, FDOT

Chris Wiglesworth, FDOT

Richard Dreyer, Tindale Oliver

Asela Silva, Tindale Oliver

Joel Rey, Tindale Oliver

PART

I

FDOT Guidance for Reviewing Transit Development Plans

1

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE





Chapter Contents

1.1 Introduction

A Transit Development Plan (TDP) is a Florida Department of Transportation-required (FDOT), 10-year horizon plan intended to support the development of an effective multimodal transportation system within a specific jurisdiction for the ultimate benefit of the State of Florida. The TDP serves as the basis for defining public transit needs, which is a prerequisite to receive State funds. The TDP Rule (Florida Administrative Code 14-73.001), as provided in Appendix A, requires that the TDP be a transit provider's planning, development, and operational guidance document and, therefore, a strategic blueprint for meeting the mobility needs within a service area. Finally, TDPs have increasingly emerged as a powerful marketing tool for transit services within a study area and can function as a catalyst for general education and awareness outreach that often is required to sustain the growth of the multimodal transportation system.

Purpose of this Handbook

The main purpose of this handbook is to guide transit agencies as they conduct major or annual TDP updates. It provides each agency with an outline to follow and useful tools to help tell its community's transit story while developing a plan to meet local transit needs. It also helps clarify the components that are required per TDP Rule and what other elements may be included that are a best practice.

1.2 10-Year TDP

Any organization benefits from an occasional pause in day-to-day activities to consider its business and purpose from a long-range perspective. This is also true for transit agencies, particularly smaller agencies with limited staff resources. Most transit managers and planners are so caught up in daily operational issues that they almost never have an opportunity to step back and take a longer-term view. The mandate to prepare a TDP enables an agency to take the time to reflect on future needs and/or

1.1 Introduction	2
Purpose of this Handbook	2
1.2 10-Year TDP	2
Requirement for Funding	2
Strategic Blueprint	3
Marketing/Promotional Tool	3
1.3 Emerging Trends	3
1.4 Challenges to Expanding Transit in Florida	3
Funding	3
Perception	4
1.5 Where Do We Go from Here?	4
1.6 TDP Process	4
Plan Development	5
1.7 TDP Adoption	5
1.8 Beyond Adoption	5
1.9 Coordination with FDOT	5
During the TDP	5
Post-TDP Submission	6
Review Timeline	6
FDOT Feedback	7
1.10 Major Update Due Dates	7
1.11 Funding the TDP Effort	7

to engage outside experts who can help it look at issues and needs with a fresh perspective. Benefits of the longer-term view typically include a clearer understanding of how daily activities fit into the agency's vision and a renewed focus on agency priorities.

Requirement for Funding

The TDP serves as the basis for defining public transit needs, which is a prerequisite to receive State block grant funds. Furthermore, Service Development Program grants, Transit Corridor Program grants, and other available FDOT discretionary grants, or transfers of funds, are prioritized when projects are included in a TDP. Hence, TDPs serve a number of purposes for a transit agency in its pursuit of enhancing its multimodal connectivity and services. The State's interest in TDPs is governed by Sections 339.135,

and 339.155, Florida Statutes, as described in Florida Administrative Code 14-73.001.

Strategic Blueprint

Beyond these regulatory and administrative motivations, TDPs are intended to serve as strategic planning documents. TDPs define public transportation needs, solicit broad input by coordinating with other plans, involve substantial public participation and explore community goals with decision-makers and other stakeholders, define alternative courses of action, and develop a systematic plan and monitoring program. While required by FDOT, the greatest value from the TDP planning effort, its gathered data, and resultant documents occurs when an agency uses the TDP to serve the local area and the traveling public by providing a logical, comprehensive basis for exploring and addressing near and mid-term public transit needs and opportunities. If an agency is able to consider the questions “Where are we now? Where do we want to be? And how can we get there?” throughout the TDP planning effort, it will be empowered to produce a strategic blueprint.

Marketing/Promotional Tool

With each TDP that an agency completes, the role of public input and the amount of public outreach activities continues to grow, teeing up the TDP to function as a significant marketing tool for the agency to promote its services. Educating the public about current and recommended future transit services every five years, including how to use services, and even what technologies are available now and in the future for the transit agency, should be a key function of the TDP development process while receiving informed feedback on the mobility needs of the community.

1.3 Emerging Trends

The field of transportation planning is rapidly evolving and new technologies are pulling the industry in a number of

directions. New scheduling and communication systems, fare technologies, and an improved customer focus at many levels are just a few of the headlining trends. TDPs stand to be influenced by, and can influence, the impact that many of these new technologies and trends have on an agency’s services.

However, there are three technological trends worth delving deeper into since these acutely impact a TDP’s ability to solicit public opinion, maximize ridership with available resources, and access new rider markets in the future. These include the growth of social media, the emergence of mobility-on-demand solutions (e.g., Transportation Network Companies), as well as the eventual proliferation of autonomous buses. More and more, current TDPs are seeking to address the acute challenges and potential benefits of such trends. Some of their approaches will be reviewed further in Chapter 2.

1.4 Challenges to Expanding Transit in Florida

While transit agencies face many challenges everyday, there are two particularly significant and consistent challenges for transit agencies in Florida: decreasing levels of funding and a generally negative perception of public transit services by non-users. Even when solutions can be found to the immediate challenges of gathering public input, identifying fiscally-responsible service alternatives, incorporating new technologies, funding the TDP’s recommendations, and reversing the widely-held view of public transit as a social service remain perennial challenges for transit agencies.

Funding

The challenge of funding is a multi-faceted concern faced by agencies in Florida. Unsteady ridership levels, declining support at all levels of government, and growing competition for dwindling local funding for transportation are just a few of reasons for a challenging financial landscape. Funding is a major issue that must be

addressed carefully given the widely opposing views on transit. Often, the likelihood of securing long-term funds is a decision factor for prioritizing various service projects; however, the receipt of funding is not always tied to the services of the greatest need.

Perception

A major challenge facing transit is that it is not widely considered to be a viable mobility option. This is especially true in smaller, less dense urbanized areas with little traffic congestion and few, if any, parking problems. The effect of the automobile on urban form has heightened this perception. As rural areas become more suburbanized, the automobile is increasingly seen as an absolute necessity; moreover, one without substitutes. The perception that transit cannot complement an overwhelmingly automobile-centric transportation system is a common conclusion.

This perception has serious strategic implications for a transit agency. However, the TDP can offer a blueprint for improving the viability of transit in communities by providing a forum to educate and encourage the public about transit and its benefits.

1.5 Where Do We Go from Here?

As best it can, the TDP should leverage the emerging trends and established best practices in the industry to meet a community's transportation needs, overcoming funding and perception challenges preemptively in the process. By identifying trends, such as improving perceptions of public transit, transit agencies can maximize the effort committed towards the pursuit of its vision and mission.

For instance, building on the example of improving public perception, the recent attention garnered by the myriad benefits of alternative transportation, the changing mobility needs of an older population, and/or the growth in downtown redevelopment, all point to the potential for an improved perception for public transportation services in

TDP Case Studies

Throughout this handbook, a series of case studies are provided in order to provide tangible examples of TDP best practices along with a discussion of when such techniques are most appropriate and the possible benefits that these may confer to the transit agency.



Case Study



the near future. Any effort expended by a transit agency to improve the perception of its services will be aided by this natural emerging trend.

In addition to capitalizing on trends, an agency can also refocus its efforts in balancing the tradeoffs inherent to public transit (e.g., coverage vs. ridership) by leveraging tools and technologies in new ways, many of which are outlined subsequently herein as enhancements to the TDP process and its components.

1.6 TDP Process

The TDP process is one that not only meets the legal requirements of the State of Florida, but also is produced through a strategic planning process that yields a blueprint for public transportation services and the relationship of such to other modes of transportation. The blueprint incorporates a variety of data sources, analysis techniques, and prioritization methods to balance all of the inputs and

operating conditions in order to provide a set of recommendations that best serve the community, both now and in the foreseeable future.

The strong reliance on public input and convergence with sound data gathering and analysis lends credence to the TDP's ability to effectively meet the transportation needs of the public.

Plan Development

The specific data gathering and analyses required to complete the TDP are presented in more detail in the succeeding chapters; however, they are outlined in brief below.

- Baseline Conditions Assessment
- Existing Services & Evaluation
- Public Involvement
- Situation Appraisal
- Goals & Objectives
- Demand Assessment
- Alternatives Development & Evaluation
- 10-Year Transit Plan
- Plan Implementation & Coordination

1.7 TDP Adoption

Once the TDP is complete, the TDP Rule requires that it be officially adopted by the agency's governing body. County commissions and city councils adopt the TDPs of transit agencies operating as a part of those general purpose governments. The boards of independent agencies or authorities must officially adopt the TDPs of those particular agencies. As stated in the TDP Rule, adopted TDPs must be submitted to the appropriate FDOT District Office by September 1st of the State fiscal year for which funding is sought.

TDP Tips

Quick tips and key points for efficiently completing key aspects of the TDP, as well as innovative ways to save time and resources while achieving the same or better results, will also be provided throughout the handbook.



1.8 Beyond Adoption

The TDP should serve as a marketing tool and strategic blueprint for the transit agency both during the public involvement activities of the TDP and beyond in order to remain a living document and continue to make the case for transit within the community. As stated previously, the level of awareness of public transit services is directly related to beneficial attitudes and support for such. Therefore, it is extremely valuable for TDPs to be regarded as one element of a comprehensive strategy to maintain support for transit.

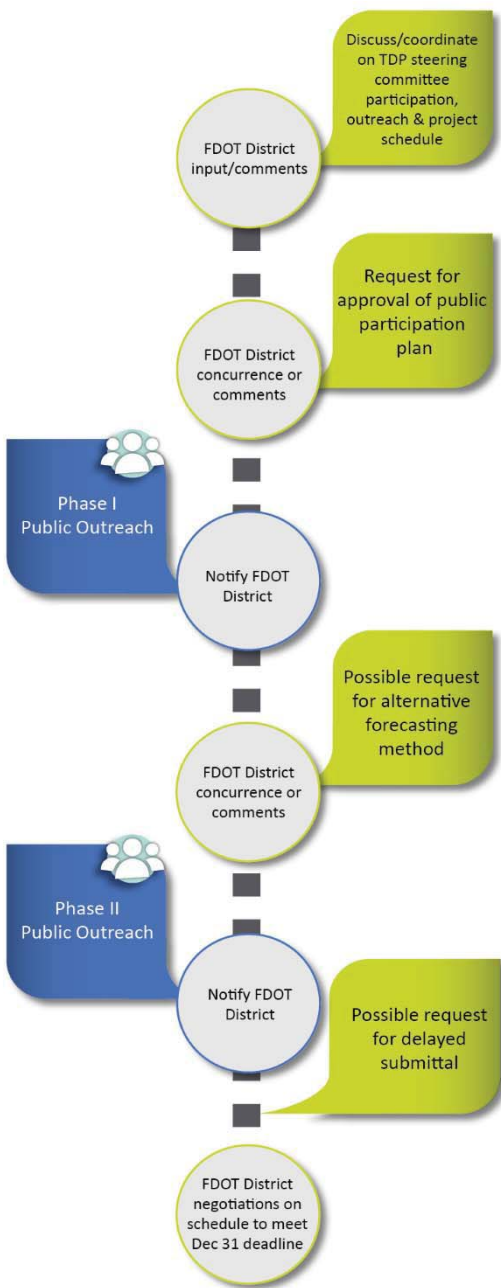
1.9 Coordination with FDOT

Timely communication and coordination with FDOT is a key ingredient of a successful TDP in Florida. While Figure 1-1 outlines some of the key points of communication with FDOT during the plan development process, additional communication and coordination is beneficial and always encouraged.

During the TDP

Prior to the official kick-off of the TDP, preliminary discussions with FDOT are encouraged and may cover topics such as the proposed project schedule, initial data needs, preliminary public outreach plans, and consideration of whether any steering or advisory committee for the TDP should include a representative from FDOT. During the TDP, discussions can continue, as needed, either as part of an established committee

Figure 1-1: Communication with FDOT



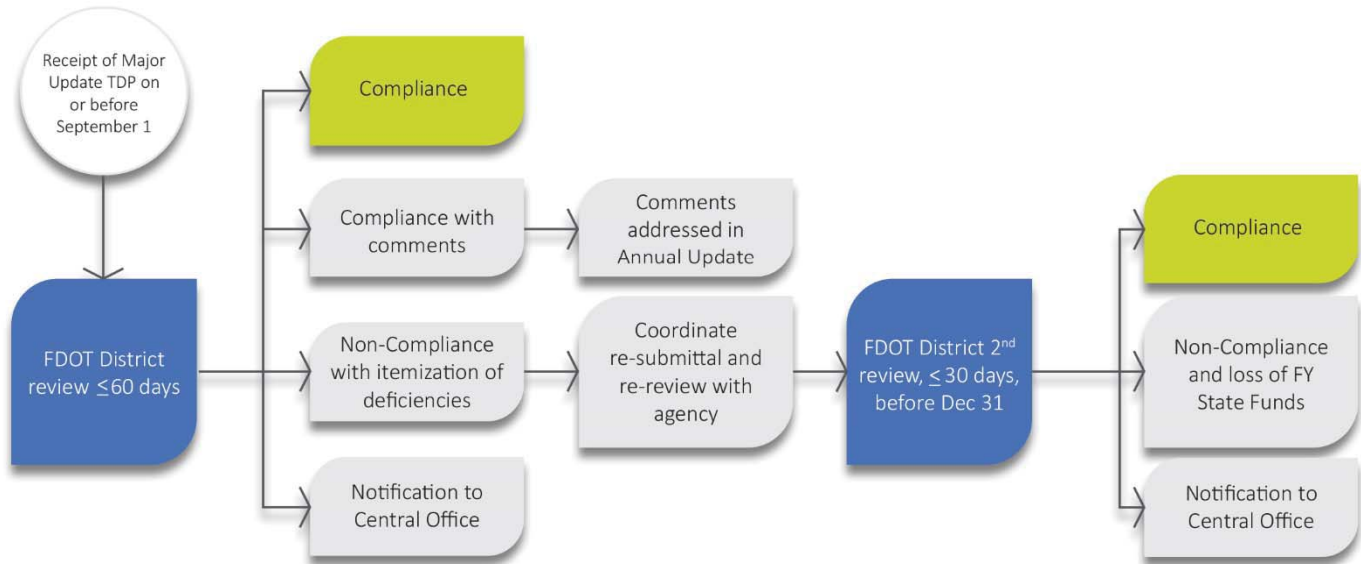
process or informally, and should continue to empower the agency to use the most accurate information available in conducting its TDP (e.g., forecasts of federal or state funding sources). In sum, it is valuable to involve FDOT staff throughout the TDP process to solicit guidance and ensure that there are no surprises upon the submission of the plan.

Post-TDP Submission

The FDOT review and approval process for TDPs is outlined in the following graphic, Figure 1-2. The general flow and outcomes of the review process can be summarized as follows:

- **Notification of Compliance** – for major updates and annual progress reports (APR), the District Offices will send a notification of compliance to those agencies whose submittals have been deemed to be compliant with the TDP Rule. This notification will be transmitted before the end of December and provide assurance of receipt of apportioned State funds for that fiscal year.
- **Notification of Compliance with Comments** – for major updates and APRs, the District Offices will send a notification of compliance with comments to those agencies whose submittals have been deemed to be compliant with the TDP Rule, but may need or benefit from changes incorporated in the next APR. This enables a District Office to share feedback and suggestions with an agency so that its TDP processes can be improved and it can avoid risking non-compliance in the future.
- **Notification of Non-Compliance and Itemization of Deficiencies** – this designation provides the agency with an itemization of specific deficiencies that need to be addressed before a second review for compliance. Notices of non-compliance are copied to the FDOT Central Office, Transit Planning Administrator.
- **Re-Reviews** – if a TDP is found non-compliant, the agency and FDOT District Office should negotiate a schedule and necessary activities for re-submittal. Re-reviews must be completed before the December 31st deadline. Re-reviews of non-compliant TDPs are limited to 30 days. A re-reviewed TDP may subsequently need to be reapproved by the adopting governing body; hence, compliance of a re-reviewed TDP may be conditional on a subsequent approval.

Figure 1-2: FDOT Submittal and Review Process for TDPs



Review Timeline

The TDP Rule sets up the review timeframes and steps: September 1–October 31 is the FDOT initial review period; November is the transit agency’s time to respond and rewrite items that were deemed noncompliant; and December is FDOT’s second review (re-review) of a corrected TDP or specific elements as appropriate. This schedule ensures all TDPs are completed by the December 31 date to establish compliance and approve State funds for the fiscal year that starts on the following July 1. Should any agency feel their schedule has been unduly delayed and they have reason to believe they will not be able to comply with the required schedule, they are encouraged to contact their FDOT District and discuss options, including possible extensions.

FDOT Feedback

When conducting a major update of the TDP, it is important to reflect upon feedback provided by the local FDOT District Office for the prior major update or APR submission. While it may be possible to address some of the feedback received as part of APRs, some of the requests may be specifically directed at efforts conducted as part of a major update.

1.10 Major Update Due Dates

TDP major updates are due at least every five years and the due year for an agency is determined based on when the last major update was completed. If an agency wishes to prepare a major update sooner than in five years, that is allowable, with the year the next TDP major update would be due revised accordingly. However, an agency cannot extend or move the year that its TDP major update is due without approval of the FDOT. In either case, shortening or lengthening, if a change is desired, the transit agency must contact its FDOT District staff to initiate the discussion before moving forward.

1.11 Funding the TDP Effort

Funding is a perennial challenge for most, if not all, transit agencies. For smaller agencies, even funding the preparation of the TDP major update and APRs can be an uphill climb and/or require innovative strategies to achieve. The TDP requirement in Florida is unique in that it is a requirement to be eligible for receiving Public Transit Block Grant funding. Because most transit agencies rely on State and Federal funding for a large share of their operating

budgets, the necessity of conducting a TDP major update every five years can require agencies to undertake a more delicate balancing act to ensure that funding is secured from the various sources.

The following strategies are included to assist a small or medium-sized transit agency in determining how to budget and finance a TDP among its other competing planning activities.

- First, it is important to remember that when receiving and using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding, planning is an eligible expense under the capital definition allowing 80 percent Federal funding to be used. Additionally, the balance can be matched in several ways, including:
 - ◊ Toll Revenue Credits (making it actually 100% Federal),
 - ◊ State and local funding (making the match 10% state and 10% local), or
 - ◊ Using all local (making the matching share 20%).
- It often is much easier to get one-time local help at the lower 10-percent or 20-percent match rate than requesting the full 100-percent amount.
- Transit agencies may want to annually set aside a portion of their Federal funding, effectively building a reserve budget to use for the TDP. If this approach is employed over 2–4 years, the annual impact on the overall grant funding and budget will be minimized. Furthermore, APRs could be included in this annual set aside, as well, but used in the year allocated. Even though FTA allows its funds to be used this way, it will monitor and check on these expenditures.
- Another strategy to consider is to pursue one-time grants that either fund the TDP directly, or better yet, are permitted to be used for general planning efforts or resource expenditures and, in turn, free-up other recurring or annual funding that can be used for the TDP. An example is pursuing FTA Section 5339 capital

funding for bus and facilities and then using FTA Section 5307 funding for the TDP. Additionally, there are State funded or managed grants for capital or operations that may assist in a similar manner.

- A strategy that has helped several agencies in the past has been to partner with other entities to fund the TDP. The partnership most often realized is with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), using its FTA Section 5305 funding. A key point to remember here is that MPOs are also often budget-constrained. However, the local MPO may be able to set aside reserve budgets on an annual basis, as well, informally earmarked for the TDP, if the transit agency works with the MPO upfront to coordinate this strategy. In this way, the cost of the TDP can be shared between the two entities. Other partners may be available, as well. In the past, private foundations, local municipalities, economic development agencies, and other local organizations have contributed to a transit agency's TDP efforts in the form of funding and/or in-kind assistance. Some of these funding sources have been competitively awarded amounts, but others have included partnerships where the entity contributes, participates in the process, and helps in approval and/or implementation phases of the TDP.

Another strategy, which often is challenging due to staffing limitations (i.e., in terms of size or expertise), is to complete certain components of the TDP in-house while hiring a consultant to complete other components. Typically, the public involvement efforts are those undertaken by the transit agency or other municipal staff. Additionally, an agency may opt to develop its own vision and goals, objectives, and strategies as part of the TDP. Finally, some agencies have opted to forego certain standard or best practices and fulfill only the minimum requirements as outlined in the TDP Rule, which often consists of a smaller public outreach effort; however, this strategy is not commonly pursued for every TDP major update.

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS

2027 TRANSIT NEEDS

15 minutes

- Most core corridors
- Routes 1, 6, 12, 14, 15, 16, 33, 34, 36, 37, 96/96, 400

20 minutes

- Peak hour express & limited express
- Airporter all day

30 minutes

- Secondary frequent network
- USF – Downtown – TIA Direct

60 minutes

- Low density areas
- Regional connections

Feeder

- Flex
- HyperLINK

Ferry

- Downtown – MacDill – St. Pete – South County

AV

- Initial pilot on Marion Street
- Beyond Marion St. later

2.1 TDP Major Update Process

Florida State Statutes require major updates of TDPs on a five-year cycle, however, extraordinary circumstances may merit more frequent updates. The required process and components are described in Chapter 14-73 (TDP Rule). TDP APRs are required in the form of a progress report, as described in Florida Administrative Code 14-73.001(4), and will be addressed as part of Chapter 4 of this handbook.

2.2 Pillars of a Good Plan

Producing a TDP that empowers the transit agency to meet the transportation needs of the community depends on many ingredients. A robust public involvement plan is a cornerstone of a well-informed TDP. However, the solicited public input needs to be placed into the regional operating and policy contexts in order for recommendations made in the TDP to come to fruition. Set in the appropriate context, the TDP functions as a strategic blueprint for meeting the community's needs, but can best identify these needs only by developing its priorities in an initially unconstrained framework. Ultimately, this blueprint, when evaluated at least on an annual basis, should become a living document and the basis for key public transportation projects in its study area.

A Strategic Blueprint

In plotting a course for a 10-year period, an agency should define and express a vision of its role in the community. The blueprint to realize this vision may be developed as part of a formal strategic planning process, or it may become explicit as the result of decisions regarding service priorities. In either case, the transit agency's vision must be firmly rooted in the community's values and grounded by behavioral and financial realities, but guided by a forward thinking and inspirational blueprint, the TDP.

The ultimate vision should be integral to, consistent with,

2.1 TDP Major Update Process	10
2.2 Pillars of a Good Plan	10
A Strategic Blueprint	10
Effective Public Engagement..	10
Local Emphasis with Region in Mind.....	11
Unconstrained Vision Vs. Attainable Targets	11
A Living Document	11
2.3 Integrating New Opportunities	12
Complete Streets	12
TNC/Ride-Hailing Services	12
Social Media Outreach	13
Autonomous Vehicles	13
2.4 Next Generation of TDPs In Florida	13
Required Components of TDP Major Update...	13
2.5 Compliance with TDP Rule.....	17



Chapter
Contents

and supportive of the overall land use and transportation vision for the region. Therefore, the TDP, as a blueprint, must strive to incorporate the myriad stakeholder values and aspirations present within the community and study area in order to adequately guide the TDP process.

It is helpful to approach the preparation of a TDP as a strategic planning process. A TDP is not an operations plan. However, by its very nature, the TDP must address strategic issues. The TDP offers opportunities to rethink transit's role in a given area and define actions to help the agency achieve its vision.

The strategic approach provides a context for evaluating, prioritizing, and presenting community and agency needs. The blueprint and its vision serve as the unifying factors to tie the various strategic activities into a coherent plan.

Effective Public Engagement

Public involvement efforts provide support and a basis for the completion of other TDP components. By grounding the development of service recommendations in the preferences voiced by the eventual beneficiaries of such

policies, TDPs can maximize benefits for the community and ensure relevancy within the universe of other planning activities conducted by local, regional, and state entities.

Local Emphasis with Region in Mind

While the TDP Rule requires certain process steps and specifies some content elements of the TDP, these requirements do not and should not constrain the development of a TDP that embodies the local aspiration and vision for transit in the community at large. The TDP should draw on the most current existing plans in the community, such as local comprehensive plans and regional transportation plans, and become a source document for other local and regional planning efforts subsequent to the TDP. Each TDP should reflect the local and regional needs resulting from the unique characteristics and composition of its area. The focus and approach of the TDP process should flow logically from the local situation and expand beyond local boundaries as needed.

Unconstrained Vision Vs. Attainable Targets

While it is common to constrain planning within budgetary limits, what is affordable may not be a reliable measure of what is needed in a community. The TDP is intended to define area-wide transit needs, develop alternatives, and make recommendations for the transit system to address these needs. Thus, the TDP development process should provide estimates of transit demand, assessments of community-wide mobility needs, and development of a range of transit alternatives, all without the constraints of historical trends and resource limitations. Only then, can the eventual recommendations be modified in light of political, market, and financial realities to develop a plan that can be implemented. The reliance on public outreach and prioritization of identified needs helps to produce a TDP that is not an amalgamated wish-list of projects.

Many agencies have difficulty bridging their unconstrained needs lists with the financial plan element. FDOT has continued to emphasize in the TDP Rule that the TDP should include a list of recommended projects for which there are no identified funding sources. This list of unfunded projects is the means to connect the unconstrained approach to needs assessment with the realities of limited funding. The list of unfunded projects also serves as the primary justification for increased funding, at the state level and potentially at the local and national levels. It is in the best interests of the transit agency that these projects have sound local support and be justified to the fullest extent possible.

Preconceived constraints, financial or otherwise, to the process of assessing needs and identifying alternatives will result in inaccurate or incomplete estimates. The TDP is intended to consider strategic issues in a community-wide context. For these purposes, an unconstrained approach is best, with the recognition that final recommendations and selected plan elements will ultimately be chosen in the context of available funds.

A Living Document

The importance of understanding transit needs as they evolve is another critical pillar of TDPs. The TDP process is not intended to stick to a strict implementation plan, but instead continue to incorporate the community's needs and adapt if new priorities emerge.

Additionally, the living nature of the TDP also pertains to its desired relationship to other transportation and community plans. Ideally, the TDP consults and is consulted by other planning activities in the study area. As a living document, the intention is that it does not find its way to the back of a shelf, but remains continually relevant and influential for transit-related decisions.

The TDP provides a medium to advance the interests of transit when funding decisions are made. TDP recommendations feed the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), as well as the FDOT Work Program and

Planning and Resource Plan. The recommendations will logically feed the long range transportation planning process undertaken by the local MPO, as well.

An agency should also learn from prior iterations of its TDP. Taking the initiative to internally evaluate, as well as reach out to FDOT to understand how the prior TDP major update or APR could have been conducted more effectively, is a strong habit of ensuring a better TDP product in the future.

2.3 Integrating New Opportunities

With any set of challenges arises new opportunities for transit agencies to reinforce their commitment to providing the community with reliable transportation. At a glance, some of these challenges may appear to threaten the current status quo of the industry; however, after taking a closer look, a number of opportunities to improve transit services through the TDP process emerge. These, as detailed in the following sections, can include working with local Complete Streets efforts, incorporating non-traditional service models for first mile/last mile connectivity, leveraging social media platforms, and beginning to look toward the future of autonomous vehicle technology for bus fleets. Other innovative strategies may include policies for bus stop consolidation to improve operating efficiencies, the incorporation of new account-based mobile ticketing technologies, and/or the development of broader marketing campaigns that may include transit education programs in schools.

Complete Streets

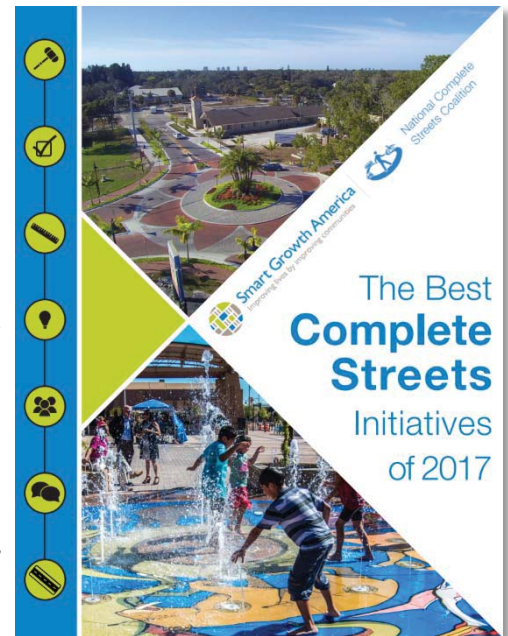
The emergence of local Complete Streets efforts and policies is accompanied by the State's initiatives (2018 FDOT Design Manual has been recognized as one of the Best Complete Streets initiatives of 2017 by Smart Growth America) to guide the design of transportation networks that are inclusive of all modes and user types. Complete Streets projects recognize the importance of focusing on

the needs of travelers who do not use automobiles, as well as to provide choices to travelers who do, including younger or older people, those with disabilities, and those who travel by transit, bicycle, and/or foot since they have been

routinely overlooked. The success of these efforts is predicated on involving stakeholders from all travel modes, and transit agencies in particular can play a significant role in contributing to the success of these projects in areas that are currently or planned to be served by the transit agency. Many communities are looking to include transit services in their Complete Streets visions, presenting a ripe opportunity for agencies to grow ridership and potentially access new funding sources.

TNC/Ride-Hailing Services

On the surface, Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) and ride-hailing services appear to be direct competitors to transit services. However, after recognizing that neither may offer a complete service to patrons, the potential for the two to complement each other remains promising. The growth in partnerships between transit agencies and various mobility-on-demand services have emerged to address first mile/last mile challenges, fill gaps in service spans or coverage in the periphery, or simply improve overall convenience for travelers. How agencies decide to work with TNCs in the coming years begins with how TDPs evaluate and incorporate their offerings.



Social Media Outreach

New platforms and online tools have opened up communication channels to reach old and new public audiences. Social media has helped lower the barriers to communication and, as a result, reduced the cost of outreach. However, any online outreach should be strategically coordinated with a broader campaign as to maximize awareness and engagement. Since many of these online ecosystems are still evolving, and companies and agencies are only beginning to refine best practices for engaging their customers, a lot of potential for these tools to benefit TDPs exists, but the nagging question is exactly how?

Autonomous Vehicles

While autonomous vehicles may not be widely adopted by consumers for a few decades, autonomous bus services and fleets are closer on the horizon. Some transit agencies have already planned pilot services using autonomous shuttle buses and the general expectation is that this adoption will continue as technologies improve and costs decrease. Autonomous buses offer not only long-term technology and safety gains for transit agencies, but they also offer short-term benefits in the form of public attention, which can improve the overall awareness of transit in a TDP's study area.

2.4 Next Generation of TDPs in Florida

The next generation of TDPs in Florida is tasked with exploiting these opportunities, as well as addressing the challenges, so that the TDP can lead to a clear identification of transit needs in a community-wide context; a prioritized listing of recommended actions; a more favorable attitude toward transit by residents, riders, and decision-makers; and a stronger competitive position for the transit agency in obtaining additional funding.

Plan Outreach Early

Planning for TDP public outreach should start at the early stages of the TDP process to ensure a timely implementation of the activities and maximize the public participation. To achieve this, the transit/planning agency should:

- Develop a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) that lays out the outreach efforts for the whole TDP;
- Develop a tentative but realistic schedule for implementing the outreach events;
- Use project kickoff/initiation meetings and conference calls to discuss the tentative schedule with the project team; and
- Set tentative dates/times for TDP outreach events and begin coordination.



Required Components of TDP Major Update

The required components for the next generation of TDPs are described below and illustrated on the next page.

Baseline Conditions Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to review the means of collecting and analyzing existing base data to gain an understanding of the environment in which the transit system is operating. In addition to the data inclusions customary for a baseline conditions assessment, an additional emphasis is made on incorporating new data sources or existing data by new means to determine portions of the service area that are particularly conducive to transit. For instance, affordable housing, major development activity, and bicycle/pedestrian network connectivity are categories of data that can be used anew in TDPs or by new means to develop the baseline conditions assessment.

1

2

3

4



Baseline Conditions Assessment

Establish a benchmark of conditions and trends within the operating environment. This assessment enables the agency to identify the community's transit goals.



Goals and Objectives

Articulate goals, objectives, and policies that set the framework for the agency to meet community needs via guiding internal and external actions and initiatives.



Existing Services and Performance Evaluation

Review key operating characteristics and current provision of services in order to identify areas for improvement and benchmark performance against peer systems.



Situation Appraisal

Synthesize how baseline conditions along with land use/design, government policies, organizational challenges, and technological advances impact how the transit agency should plan for the future.



Public Involvement

Solicit, analyze, and incorporate public input and opinion into the transit planning process to determine needs and goals and, ultimately, prioritize improvement alternatives.

1

2

3

4

5

TDP Major Update Process

The process and components of a TDP include a series of discrete and interrelated tasks that all combine to contribute to the full picture of the current operating environment and existing/future transit needs within the study area.

MacDill Air
Force Base

Transit Development Plan Process



Existing Service & Performance Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide a snapshot of the current operating characteristics of the transit system, including a review of key indicators as part of a trend analysis and peer review evaluation. Herein, case studies are provided to show how the value of traditional data sources can be amplified with new visual aids, leveraged into what is essentially a brief efficiency assessment of the current routes/system, and even how these evaluations can be utilized subsequently in the goals and objectives development.

Public Involvement

Conducting public outreach serves the critical role of engaging the community and subsequently incorporating their opinions into the transit planning process. While there are many proven practices in this arena, new technologies and innovative practices continue to emerge that allow agencies to better maximize participation, reach new audiences with online tools, and improve education efforts, all with fewer resources.

Situation Appraisal

Traditionally, this effort reviews the impacts of existing socioeconomic trends, applicable plans/policies, land use, technology, funding, and government actions relevant to the transportation system to better understand and respond to transit needs in the study area. However, increasingly, the need to address local land use policies, urban design practices, development patterns, as well as technologies at the disposal of transit agencies (i.e., Intelligent Transportation Systems [ITS], mobile apps, blogs, virtual communities) are becoming a crucial part of the required appraisal effort.

TDP Goals & Objectives

The transit agency's vision, goals, and objectives should be adapted in response to the situation identified as part

of the TDP process, as well as recognizing public participation input into these goals and objectives. The inclusion of carefully crafted objectives and performance measures can ensure that these can provide a roadmap for future transit improvements.

Transit Demand Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to estimate current and potential future ridership demand using FDOT-approved estimation tools so that this information can be used subsequently in the evaluation of alternative transit service scenarios. New estimation tools and techniques are emerging that improve the reliability of the estimated outputs.

Transit Needs Development & Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to develop a series of transit alternatives based on the preceding TDP component efforts and apply a rigorous ranking process to determine the recommendations that can provide the greatest benefit to the community over the course of the plan horizon.

10-Year Transit Plan

The 10-Year Transit Plan considers the priorities and alternatives developed in the context of the financial resources available to the agency, including current revenue sources and operating costs, as well as capital/infrastructure costs. It also proposes an acquisition/construction schedule for the funded plan, and even may include a discussion of funding alternatives (including options for new or dedicated revenue sources).

Plan Implementation & Coordination

A new recommended component of the TDP is a concerted plan for its implementation that includes a number of tasks ranging from coordination with local entities (e.g., elevating projects to MPO and regional priority lists) to leveraging the TDP brand as an opportunity to promote transit beyond adoption (i.e., public outreach during implementation).

2.5 Compliance with TDP Rule

In order to comply with the TDP Rule, Table 2-1 provides a quick reference guide to find a description of the required components of a TDP in Florida and their location within this handbook. Additionally, throughout each of the component sections in Chapters 3 and 4 of this handbook, a quick reference guide of whether an element is considered “required” by the TDP Rule or simply a best practice is provided as part of each section. When any best practice or other optional content is included in the TDP document, it should be concise and on point, and can even be indicated as additional, non-required content.

Table 2-1: Compliance with TDP Rule Requirements

Required TDP Component	TDP Rule Reference F.S. 14-73.001	Location in TDP Handbook
Baseline Conditions Assessment	Section 3 (b)	Chapter 3.1
Existing Service/Performance Evaluation	Section 3 (b)	Chapter 3.2
Public Involvement	Section 3 (a)	Chapter 3.3
Situation Appraisal	Section 3 (b)	Chapter 3.4
TDP Goals and Objectives	Section 3 (c)	Chapter 3.5
Transit Demand Assessment	Section 3 (d)	Chapter 3.6
Transit Needs Development and Evaluation	Section 3 (d)	Chapter 3.7
10-Year Transit Plan	Section 3 (e)	Chapter 3.8
Plan Implementation and Coordination	Section 3 (f)	Chapter 3.9
Annual Progress Report	Section 4	Chapter 4

Using Checklists to Ensure Compliance

A best practice to help ensure that a TDP is meeting all of the requirements of the TDP Rule, as well as to improve the ability of reviewers to readily identify the discrete elements of the TDP, is to include a checklist in the beginning of the TDP document that identifies in which section a particular required item or included best practice is located.



Public Involvement Process		TDP Section
✓	Public Involvement Plan (PIP) drafted	Section 6, Appendix E
✓	PIP approved by FDOT	
✓	TDP includes description of Public Involvement Process	
✓	Provide notification to FDOT	
✓	Provide notification to Regional Workforce Board	
Situation Appraisal		
✓	Land use	Section 2
✓	State and local transportation plans	Section 7
✓	Other governmental actions and policies	Section 7
✓	Socioeconomic trends	Sections 2 & 3
✓	Organizational issues	Section 4
✓	Technology	Section 4
✓	10-year annual projections of transit ridership using approved model	Section 9
✓	Assessment of whether land uses and urban design patterns support/hinder transit service provision	Sections 7 & 9
✓	Calculate farebox recovery	Section 5, Appendix A

3

PLAN DEVELOPMENT



3.1 Baseline Conditions Assessment

The primary purpose of this component is to gain an understanding of the environment in which the transit system is operating by an assessment of the study area demographics/socioeconomics, land use/growth patterns, and travel-based factors related to transit usage. The data collected and analyzed should provide a description of the community and facilitate a better understanding of the extent to which transit can help meet the community's goals.

The eventual recommendations in a strategically-based TDP explicitly arise from and are justified by the information gathered and analyzed. Relative to the overall strategic nature of the TDP, based on the discussion of "where we are, where we want to be, and how can we get there," the most significant purpose for the baseline conditions assessment is to establish a benchmark of conditions and trends that will allow an analysis of the operating environment's influences on the issues, challenges, and opportunities facing the transit agency.

Objectives

Baseline data development is typically the first task undertaken in the TDP process as the information collected and reviewed in this component will provide the factual basis upon which most of the subsequent TDP components are developed. It should:

- Help the public understand the environment in which the transit system operates and to spotlight areas of opportunity for development of future transit services and other related mobility options.
- Provide the foundation upon which to review trends, provide data inputs for forecasting, and evaluate land use and urban design impacts on the community's transportation networks and services.
- Establish the conditions upon which all alternatives for

3.1 Baseline Conditions

Assessment	19
Objectives	19
Gathering Baseline Data	19
Elements of Baseline Data Assessment	20
Demographic/Socioeconomic Characteristics ...	21
Land Use/Growth Characteristics	24
Travel/Mobility Characteristics	26
Data Analysis & Presentation	28



Chapter
Contents

improvement to the transit system can be measured as new opportunities and needs can emerge from the analysis of the baseline data. Similarly, solid baseline analyses provide a picture of what types of transit services may or may not prove to be realistic and successful.

While a number of key data categories for assessment will be presented for the baseline assessment component, any other relevant data that a transit agency deems helpful to pursuing these objectives should also be added and assessed.






In the sections that follow, an overview of the data gathering processes and types of baseline data sets to be collected and assessed are introduced and detailed. However, it is important to remember that the baseline conditions assessment is only the start of the data development that contributes to the full picture for the TDP development process and is leveraged by subsequent analyses.

Gathering Baseline Data

The data that are collected and presented should describe the community and include the base year of the TDP with projections through the tenth year of the planning period, where possible.

While most TDP components need not be accomplished in a specific order, the compilation of baseline data should

Table 3-1: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Baseline Conditions	TDP Rule Required *	Best Practice
Demographic		
Socioeconomic		
Land Use		
Growth		
Travel/Mobility		

**While the TDP Rule does not specifically require a Baseline Conditions assessment, data that are needed in the Situation Appraisal, which is required per the TDP Rule, are collected and analyzed as part of this component. The extent and type of data points assessed may vary, but, in general, TDPs must, at a minimum, review demographic, socioeconomic, and land use data.*

be one of the first tasks completed. The remaining tasks use and build upon the information resulting from these assessments.

Several demographic characteristics are directly related to transit usage. For instance, the identification of transit-dependent population segments (e.g., based on income, age, and vehicle ownership data) is extremely important in helping define a key component of the mobility needs of the community. In addition, travel patterns can offer insight into potential transit needs, as well. Traffic conditions, such as levels of congestion and parking availability, also have an effect on transit usage. Finally, the location of activity centers that act as major trip generators and attractors must be identified and compared with the existing transit network. Suggestions regarding how the data might best be analyzed are included throughout the remainder of this handbook.

The ultimate success of the TDP is strongly influenced by the quality and relevance of the data used and the extent to which the recommendations are derived from analysis of the data. The data needs and availability may be different from community to community because each system and community are different. However, some of the commonly used data sources are categorized below.

- **Local Sources** – include data collected by the local/regional planning agency and other city and county agencies for various studies and plans. MPOs possess a wealth of baseline data collected for a range of transportation studies, corridor analyses, maps, and, in particular, the urbanized area’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).
- **Non-Local Sources** – include data and tools from the Census, American Community Survey (ACS), Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida, college/university research centers, American Public Transportation Association (APTA), FTA, Transportation Research Board (TRB), Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), and others.

It is also important to note that the TDP Rule emphasizes the need for coordination between a transit agency and the local MPO. Early involvement with the MPO in baseline data collection efforts can initiate and promote this coordination so that the TDP may better relate to the current LRTP, as well as become a more useful reference document for the MPO’s next update of the LRTP and help inform efforts related to the MPO’s Transportation Improvement Program, Congestion Management Plan (CMP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Elements of Baseline Data Assessment

Depending on data availability, the nature of the information used in the baseline conditions assessment generally lends itself to be nested within the following three broad categories:

- Demographic/Socioeconomic Characteristics
- Land Use/Growth Characteristics
- Travel/Mobility Characteristics

Additionally, these categories may serve to organize the documentation of this TDP component to the extent data are available to the agency.

Demographic/Socioeconomic Characteristics

Overview of Study Area

First and foremost, a description of the physical study area should be provided to clarify the geographic context of the TDP. Transportation networks have the effect of blurring the lines between counties and cities; therefore, it is critical to clarify early on, probably at project kick off, the appropriate context for the TDP for the purpose of determining the areas that are outside of the study area, or perhaps overlooked parts within the study area (i.e., out-lying portions of a county), and developing an understanding of important activity centers and connections adjacent to the study area.

Population & Housing

Population density is a key characteristic affecting transit use. Population density levels can be illustrated in map form for the study area and can be compared with the transit system's route network. Similarly, an analysis of housing unit density levels in the study area offers insight as to where residential development is concentrated. Transit works best in dense areas, so these areas should be a priority when introducing or expanding service.

Population Segments with Higher Transit Orientation

Population Below Poverty

Low-income households are considered to be one of the primary market segments of the traditional transit rider market. Identifying the locations of low-income or below poverty households proves useful when developing demand estimates for transit and potential service alternatives.

Zero-Vehicle Households

Areas exhibiting zero or low incidence of vehicle ownership can also be characterized as comparably transit-oriented. The distribution of vehicle availability should be identified

Baseline Data Findings Can Save Resources

SunTran TDP, Ocala/Marion County

Identifying information early on in the TDP process for key employers such as shift sizes, shift time changes, future expansion plans, and key transportation challenges faced by employees (i.e., parking constraints, finding a ride, avoiding traffic) can provide useful insight when designing and prioritizing alternatives in later stages of the TDP. For example, a transit agency can be more resource-efficient if it provides service to a particular employer only at a few times of the day instead of hourly and simultaneously maximize its value to potential employee riders.

The baseline conditions assessment in the 2017 TDP for the Ocala/Marion County TPO and SunTran collected such information that helped the agency extend/adjust an existing route to provide a connection to a recently developed industrial park with a large warehouse employer only when the shifts changed. At other times, the route kept its regular pattern. The information helped the agency save resources by not having to add a new route to serve the location.



Case Study



to gain insight into the geographic locations of households with low to no vehicle ownership. While not necessarily identical to low income areas, the locations will overlap considerably. Areas with low vehicle availability have a greater tendency to use transit.

Affordable Housing

Areas with affordable housing units where occupants are enrolled in a housing voucher program or receive federal housing assistance may indicate an area that may have a comparably higher transit orientation. Unlike populations below poverty or in zero-vehicle households, the locations of affordable housing units may be more static over time.

Public Health

Considering that the majority of transit trips include walking or other active transportation modes (e.g., bicycling) as the most common means of ingress/egress before boarding and alighting a transit vehicle, the availability and use of transit service impacts the community's overall health. While there are a number of complex factors that contribute to and influence a community's overall health, it can be surmised that an increase in transit utilization may lead to an increase in overall activity levels in a community. Therefore, understanding a community's current level of physical activity, as ascertained through data from the Florida Department of Health (<http://www.flhealthcharts.com>), can help enhance an agency's ability to contribute to improving the local level of physical activity, which in turn will provide a number of health benefits.

TD Population Trends

The Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) population includes persons who are eligible for agency-sponsored trips, namely individuals that can be considered disabled, elderly, and/or low-income persons, and children who are high-risk or at-risk. Monitoring changes in the TD population in the study area, as well as the rate at which the population is served by the local Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), has implications for

transit agencies. Whether or not the transit agency is also the trip coordinator, the rate at which the TD population is served may influence the demand for an agency's regular transit services.

Seasonal Populations

Many communities in Florida experience significant seasonal shifts in population due to snowbirds (e.g., seasonal residents that live in Florida for several months at a time) and other tourists and visitors. The impacts of these part-time residents and visitors must be considered in the TDP process since these populations can have a measurable effect on mobility needs and services. For instance, the seasonal influx of tourists and other visitors may result in the need for additional transit services, especially within beach communities. Information on seasonal population shifts often can be obtained from state or local planning agencies, as well as local convention and visitors bureaus.

Employment

Employment locations and densities are important determining factors with regard to the extent to which transit can feasibly serve work trips effectively. Urbanized areas with significant levels of employment in a Central Business District (CBD) are more transit-friendly than those with more dispersed employment concentrations. A large, but low-density industrial park located at the edge of an urbanized area will likely not attract many transit trips and may not be feasible to serve with traditional fixed-route transit.

Major employment clusters/hubs should receive special attention in planning transit service. Additionally, shifts in employment densities also should be reviewed, as shown in Figure 3-1 on the next page.

Age Distributions

The population age distribution, with emphasis on youth (under 16 years of age) and older adults (more than 65 years of age), is useful in determining additional mobility

needs that could be met through transit services. The young and the old typically are less likely to have access to a vehicle or prefer to drive (a known trend with millennials, in general), which make them more attracted to public transit for their travel needs.

Income Levels

Information on the income of residents in the study area should be included in the compilation of baseline data. As previously mentioned, low-income households often have limited mobility options and, therefore, have a greater reliance on public transit. Such areas may be characterized as transit-dependent and generally have high potential for transit use. Higher income areas, unless they are retirement communities, may also indicate lower potential for transit success.

Vehicle Availability

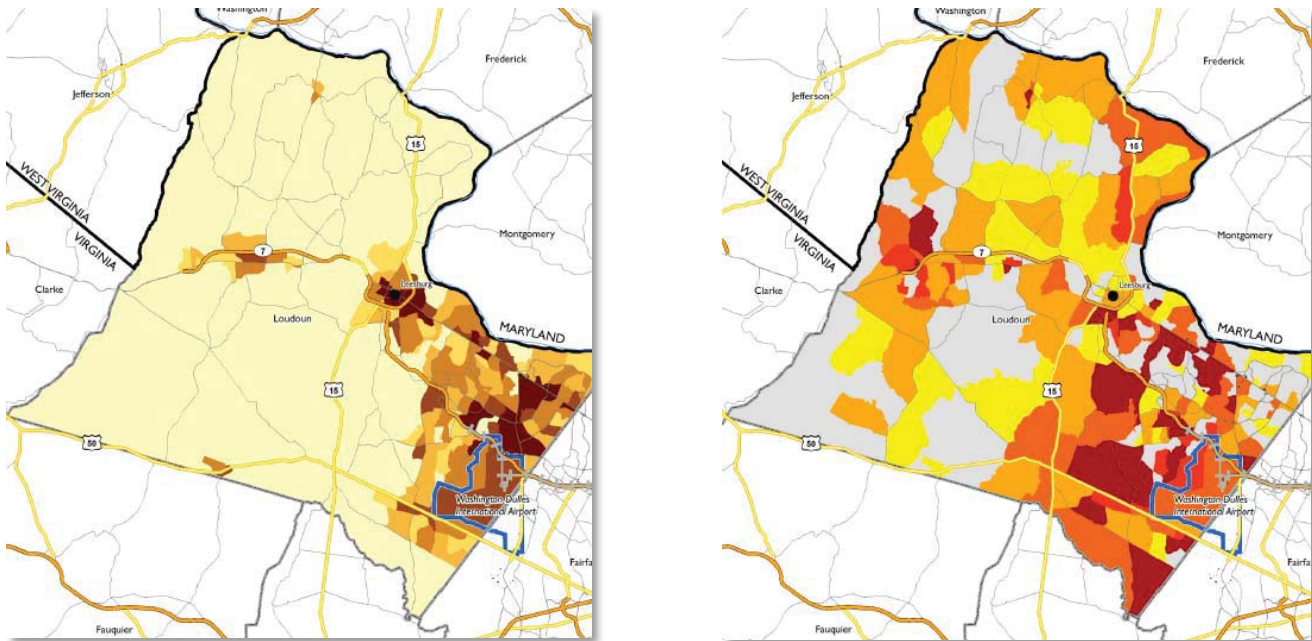
Areas exhibiting a low incidence of vehicle ownership also can be characterized as comparably transit dependent,

especially in cases where the number of licensed drivers in a household exceeds number of functioning vehicles for use. As previously mentioned, the distribution of vehicle availability should be analyzed in the TDP to gain insight into the geographic locations of households with low or zero-vehicle ownership. While not necessarily identical to low-income areas, low-income and zero-vehicle areas may likely have considerable overlap. Individuals with low vehicle availability have a greater tendency to utilize public transit.

Educational Attainment

Related to the dispersion of income levels and poverty incidence is a population's level of educational attainment. Where data on poverty or other measures is not readily available, data summarizing a population's level of educational attainment can be used as a proxy for helping identify areas with persons who may rely on public assistance, regularly visit social services offices, and/or reside in affordable housing.

Figure 3-1: Employment Density (left) and Projected Change (right)



One helpful means of presenting this information is to show current densities alongside the projected level of change in terms of a percentage. Providing a visual representation of population and employment changes can enable a quicker way to determine parts of the study area that may deserve more focus when evaluating potential transit services.

Source: Loudoun County (VA) TDP, 2016

Labor Force Participation/ Unemployment Rate

Along with the examination of employment density, the analysis of labor force participation rates can also offer insight into work-based travel needs. Additionally, a transit agency may consider including information on the unemployment rate within the study area, to provide additional information concerning employment patterns.

Land Use/Growth Characteristics

Macroeconomic Indicators

The overall economic condition of the study area, including the general health of key industries and employers, can provide insight into understanding the current and future trends of population and employment growth within an area. Areas where there is strong economic growth often correlate with increases in traffic, congestion, and travel costs, under which conditions transit services may provide a viable mobility alternative.

Development Activity

The review of major development activity can take a variety of forms depending on the general environment and trajectory of the study area, e.g., is it increasing in population, or becoming a growing employment center? While these macro trends may be readily apparent at the county level, it is important for TDPs to take a closer look into exactly what type of development may be occurring (e.g., residential houses, apartments, offices, or retail centers), and where relative to already developed areas. Additionally, there may be large redevelopment projects occurring or districts relevant to the study area. For instance, corridor redevelopment, Community Redevelopment Areas, and facility rehabilitations all present potential challenges, opportunities, and areas for partnership for transit agencies that can be addressed in the TDP.

Leveraging Data

Data collection and summarization alone are not value-maximizing.

The TDP should incorporate findings from baseline analyses into later TDP components, especially in the Situation Appraisal. The TDP must identify the existence of connections between the study area data and the transit-related goals of the community. In particular, the baseline conditions assessment data should be leveraged in the evaluation of alternatives and during the preparation of the needs plan.



Activity Centers/Major Hubs

Activity centers are places within a community that have a strong attraction for resident travel either for employment or patronage purposes, such as medical facilities, recreational areas, educational establishments, shopping centers, and clusters of government services or business offices.

Activity centers have an impact on the transportation system that is not typical of usual employers, residential areas, or surrounding land uses. Consideration of these areas may be necessary to take advantage of potential transit trips and to ensure that buses can avoid periodic congestion caused by these uses. For example, a university campus typically does not require that all students and employees arrive to campus at the same time, as would be typical of many other employers.

It is important to consider how some activity centers may attract transit users more than others. For instance, it may be worthwhile to separately identify assisted living facilities, government services centers, schools, and other public facilities. Figure 3-2 provides an example of maps that highlight transit-oriented activity centers.

Figure 3-2: Transit-Oriented Activity Centers

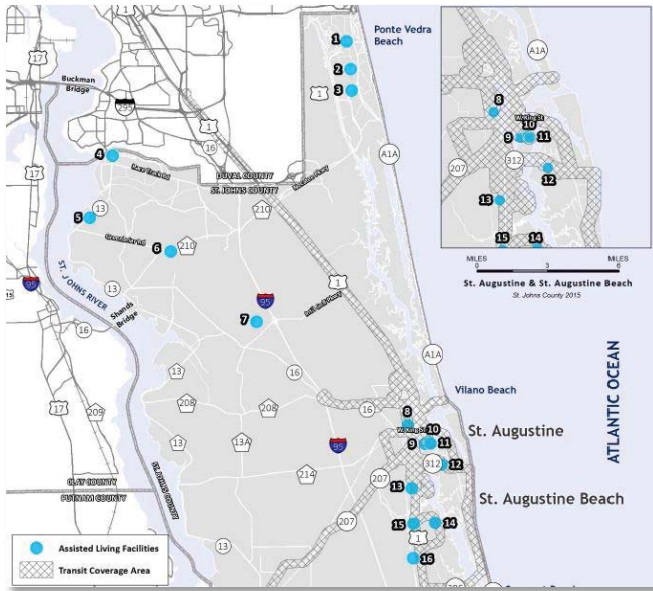
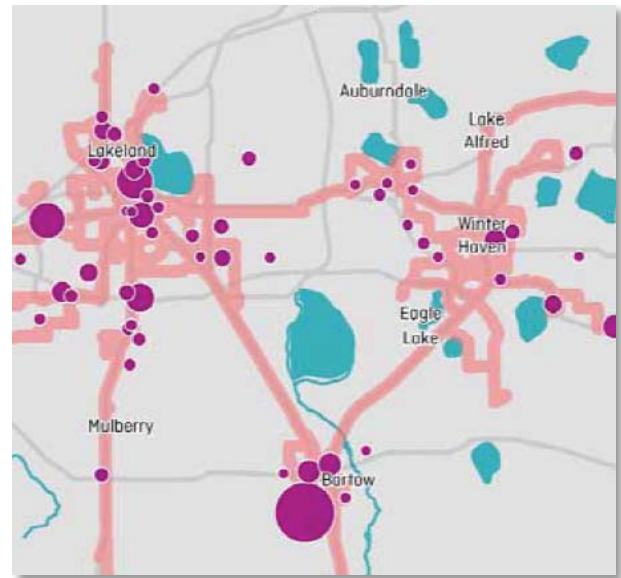


Figure 3-3: Employment Centers



In addition to identifying the typical activity centers, such as malls, hospitals, and major employers, identifying activity centers that attract a comparably transit-oriented population can be helpful in prioritizing potential new services. Some examples include assisted living facilities, social service agencies, and public buildings.

Source: St. Johns County TDP, 2016

Identifying the employment centers in terms of their relative size alongside a depiction of the existing transit network can enable agencies to identify gaps in the network and potential opportunities to prioritize employers with which to develop partnerships.

Source: Polk County TDP, 2016

Employment by Industry, Major Employers

The typical industries and occupations in which residents are employed may influence their propensity to ride transit, depending on the location of their home and occupations and the nature and hours of their specific jobs. For instance, an understanding of the proportion of workers employed in service or professional occupations may enable the transit agency to begin to understand the typical commute flows and schedules for individuals in the study area.

Additionally, some firms may employ enough workers at individual locations that may directly benefit from the provision of transit services or at least the coordination of service schedules with shift change times/business hours. Transit agencies should collect information on the largest employers in their study areas such as their business hours/shift change times and numbers of employees.

Maps should be prepared that plot major employment locations and indicate how the existing transit network serves them or where gaps in service may exist. Figure 3-3 provides an example of how job centers of varying sizes can be depicted alongside the transit network.

Land Use Patterns & Scenarios

A review of the pertinent land use plans for the jurisdictions within the study area is an important part of the baseline conditions review. Not only is it important to understand current land use designations, but also the future land use designations, which depict how a county or its constituent municipalities envision development patterns to occur years into the future. At a minimum, a review of the county's current and future land use maps, as well as those of the principal municipalities, is recommended at this stage of the TDP.

However, it is sometimes appropriate to recreate land use maps for the purpose of the TDP specifically. In particular,

maps can be recreated to only show the land use designations that are comparably transit-supportive. High-density or multi-family residential areas, mixed-use areas, office areas, and community spaces are commonly considered transit-supportive land uses.

Travel/Mobility Characteristics

Journey-to-Work/Commute Patterns

Census information on journey-to-work can also be quite useful. Published data include the means of travel to work and the travel time to work. Specifically, analyzing data on the means of travel to work provides information on the proportion of workers who drive alone to work, carpool/vanpool, use public transportation, bicycle or walk, or work at home. An additional resource for commuting data, particularly on non single-occupant vehicle travelers, is the Commuter Services program in Florida.

Travel time to work provides information on how long it takes workers to get to their jobs. Information regarding place-to-place work commutes within a metropolitan area may also be available for the study area. These data can provide insight to inter-county travel patterns, which may support mobility services such as express buses, van pools, car pools, and even commuter rail in some instances.

Traffic Congestion

An analysis of traffic congestion in the study area will identify areas where roadways or roadway segments are deficient in terms of level of service (LOS). Deficient roadways or corridors can be targeted for increased transit service or for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to prevent further deterioration of the current LOS. However, in the short term, deficient corridors are indicators of places where it may be difficult for transit to maintain schedules.

Connectivity Between Major Hubs

System characteristics, including major trip generators and attractors, should be addressed in this task. Major trip

generators and attractors, such as shopping malls, employment centers, entertainment facilities, government centers, health care facilities, education centers, and other centers of activity within the study area, should be listed, as well as portrayed in map form. It is useful to include the transit route network on the same maps to show clearly the extent to which the current network serves, or does not serve, the major generators.

Parking

Because of its effect on transit use, a description of parking conditions in the study area should be included in the TDP; or, if the study area has specific locations with major parking issues, then maybe a closer examination of only those areas would be necessary. The location, availability, and costs of parking will influence an individual's travel mode choice. Large quantities of low-cost or free parking will decrease the need for transit and may make it more difficult to encourage alternative modes of transportation. Parking shortages due to quantity or price could help lead to increased use of the transit system, especially related to the need for beach parking.

The analysis of parking data must be sensitive to potential localized effects. For example, it may appear that a CBD has ample, low-cost parking overall, but there may be portions of the CBD in which parking is scarce. Depending upon activity levels, such an area may have significant potential for supporting transit service.

First Mile/Last Mile Connectivity

In today's operating environment, one ubiquitous challenge faced by transit agencies across the country is the need to improve first mile/last mile connections within existing transit networks. This challenge is significant in Florida where areas that exhibit transit-supportive employment and residential densities are not always geographically connected to one another, or they are simply geographically separated by areas of low density. This makes it challenging to provide transit services to all of these dispersed locations.

As an innovative way to respond to these challenges, some transit agencies have recently begun partnering with TNCs to address this service gap. TNC services, more commonly referred to as ride-sourcing programs (ranging from ride-sharing to ride-hailing) are similar to conventional taxi services except that the services connect drivers to consumers typically through the use of a mobile application. These services are growing in popularity, especially among young adults and, in many locations, naturally grew to complement spatial or temporal gaps in transit services before partnerships were considered an option.

In addition, transit agencies are also weighing the potential role of TNC solutions beyond the first mile/last mile application in areas of lower population density and adopting these services to replace the later hours of current fixed-route service, which is sometimes severely underutilized as evidenced by low ridership levels after peak hour evening travel.

TNCs are not the only potential first mile/last mile solution and, increasingly, agencies are conducting research into potential solutions employed by peer agencies, including technology-based or multimodal network connectivity enhancements. The goal of this research during the baseline data assessment is to begin determining how innovative service delivery options may be incorporated into existing and traditional transit networks.

Ride-Hailing Data

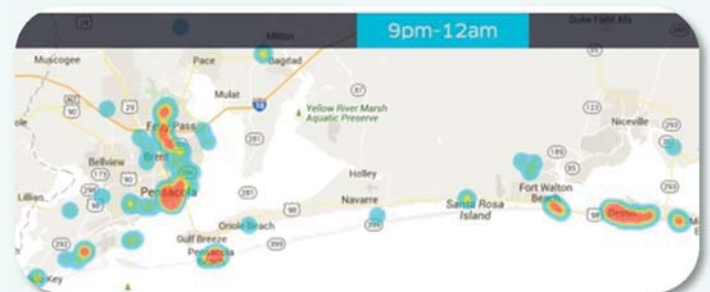
With the introduction of new service providers, such as Uber and Lyft, comes the collection and availability of new data on travel patterns. Ride-hailing companies have begun to work with municipalities to enrich the available data, which municipalities increasingly consult, as well as that which is made available to TNC drivers. TDPs can also benefit from using these data, where available, to determine where there may be connectivity gaps in the current transit and multimodal networks.

Understanding Existing Ride-Hailing Activities to Expand Mobility Options

Connections 2026 TDP, Escambia County, FL

Uber, Lyft, and other ride-hailing services are now available in many cities and counties throughout Florida. Since the arrival of these providers, new types of ride-hailing services have evolved and are slowly emerging in local service areas, such as Uber Pool and Uber Health. Also accompanying the arrival of these services is the opportunity to see available data about passenger pick-up and drop-off hot spots, fare estimates, and temporal information. Taken together, these insights may enable transit agencies to identify gaps in their current network or even areas of unmet demand.

As part of its TDP, ECAT was able to leverage “hot spot” maps in order to identify high activity zones for Uber rides. Using this information, ECAT identified areas with heavy use of Uber after its transit services had concluded for the night. Going forward, ECAT can use this information to modify its existing services, explore partnership with Uber, or enter into a contract with another TNC to ensure adequate mobility for its riders once fixed-route services have concluded for the day.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Networks

Transit passengers are typically pedestrians on both ends of their transit trip. Therefore, the study area’s pedestrian



Case Study



FTA Resources

FTA's new "Manual on Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections to Transit" provides a complete look at the best practices in pursuing pedestrian and bicycle safety and access to transit, including information on evaluating, planning for, and implementing improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access to transit. The manual provides an excellent starting point for TDPs to consider the funding and coordination responsibilities of connecting with pedestrian/bicycle networks.

to extending the effective reach of the network for them, all the way to contributing to reducing congestion and adding redundancy to the network, it makes sense for TDPs to consider how to integrate the existing transit network with existing and planned bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

Data Analysis & Presentation

The methods of analysis ultimately rest with the individual transit agency, and depends upon the availability of data for the study area. While most of the information described as part of the baseline data assessment can be presented in tabular form, maps and figures are encouraged as they provide a quick, visual reference for the individual characteristics as these relate to transit use. Overlaying a transit system map on another map showing baseline data can provide for quicker interpretation and easier public education, when appropriate.

In addition to displaying information graphically, a variety of other visual aids can be employed to convey key trends and characteristics for the study area. When visuals are enhanced and summarized in a professional manner, these also can be used extensively to "tell the story" that a transit agency wants to promote during public involvement activities.

access and its relationship to the system's bus stops will have a great impact on the potential success of transit services. The TDP should include some discussion on the importance of adequate pedestrian accessibility throughout the study area. At a minimum, this discussion should include an overview of the existing sidewalk network, as well as the ADA accessibility of the sidewalks and crosswalks, particularly along transit routes.

A good practice to adopt, which enables a thorough understanding of the pedestrian and bicycle networks, is the production of maps that can clearly depict the type of facilities that currently exist and key projects that are planned in the near future. An understanding of the exact type and condition of facilities in the study area is important and more helpful than a general notation that "bicycle connections exist on a particular road." For instance, are sidewalks on both sides of the road? Are there bicycle lanes (i.e., on roads) or routes (i.e., separate trails)?

Overlaying the transit network alongside these networks is a key means of identifying gaps between these important multimodal networks. Additionally, sophisticated mapping tools now allow for the calculation of more exact walking distances based on the actual pedestrian/bicycle facilities instead of a simple distance buffer. Examples of maps showing existing pedestrian/bicycle networks, as well as an accurate representation of travel times may be provided as part of this baseline data assessment.

Additionally, the provision of pedestrian/passenger amenities will help make transit services a more viable and attractive mobility option. The TDP should detail the existing passenger amenities provided (i.e., benches, shelters, transfer centers, information signage, accommodation of bicycles, etc.), as well as areas of need for additional pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

The importance of providing connections to transit via pedestrian and bicycle networks cannot be overstated. From ensuring the safety, health, and well-being of riders,

3.2 Existing Services & Performance Evaluation

The purpose of this section is to provide a context for and complete a subsequent review of the subject transit agency's key operating characteristics and performance. The context can aid in the development of an understanding of unique operating conditions with respect to the system's history, institutional arrangements, and its current provision of public transportation services. It also can provide useful subtext for better interpretation of how current service performance compares to those of selected peer transit systems. The analysis of a variety of performance indicators and measures can help identify areas where the agency is performing well and provide a forum to focus on areas that may require further attention.

The base data collected for the system profile and performance evaluation can be used as a tool to provide an assessment of the agency's condition and shared during public outreach activities. The performance evaluation serves to reveal existing conditions and trends for the situation appraisal and also influences the development of service alternatives. Equipped with results from the evaluation and informed outreach feedback, it is then possible to formulate logical goals, objectives, and strategies for the TDP that are designed to enhance service performance.

Objectives

The performance evaluation component of the TDP provides a useful and important tool for monitoring and improving transit system performance, mainly resulting from a review of historical trends and a peer comparison analysis. However, it should be noted that the findings of trend and peer analyses are only a starting point for fully understanding the performance of transit systems. The issues identified provide the basis for a series of questions that can lead to an enhanced understanding of the "hows" and "whys" of system performance.

3.2 Existing Services &

Performance Evaluation	29
Objectives	29
Existing System Profile.....	29
System Performance Evaluation	33
Farebox Report	37
Performance Evaluation to Set Goals & Objectives	38



Chapter
Contents

However, this evaluation does not directly measure considerations such as passenger satisfaction, public attitudes towards transit, or contributions to economic development. In addition, the objective of the performance evaluation is not to gauge the quality of service (e.g., vehicle cleanliness and comfort, operator courtesy, or on-time performance), marketing and community awareness, or even the level of satisfaction with hours of operation, frequency of service, or geographic coverage of the service. Those system attributes are instead typically addressed during public outreach.

Nevertheless, because the performance evaluation component is ideally completed early on in the TDP process, it can be used to inform the public during the outreach efforts that are specifically geared towards collecting information on these other system attributes. Additionally, later sections of the TDP can be completed with a holistic understanding of the system's key operating characteristics and anticipated near-future trends.

Existing System Profile

The strategic planning nature of a TDP provides context for evaluating, prioritizing, and addressing community and agency needs. Recommendations in a strategically-based TDP explicitly arise from and are justified by the information gathered in this component of the TDP process. Therefore, the performance data collected as part of this information gathering effort should include a

Table 3-2: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Service Performance Evaluation	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
Existing System Profile		✓
Trend Analysis	✓	
Peer Review Analysis	✓	
Aspirational Peer Review		✓
Farebox Report*	✓	

*Required by Florida House Bill 985. See more information later in this section.

good description of current services provided by the agency and its technological/capital resources and capabilities/assets.

Service Overview

A profile of the existing transit system in the study area provides a reference point for examining operating characteristics and evaluating system performance. This should include:

- A brief narrative of the system's history within the study area;
- The current institutional arrangements describing who oversees and manages the transit services (i.e., city department, county department, independent transportation authority, management firm, etc.); and
- A description of the types of services currently provided by the agency, including both fixed route and paratransit, if applicable.

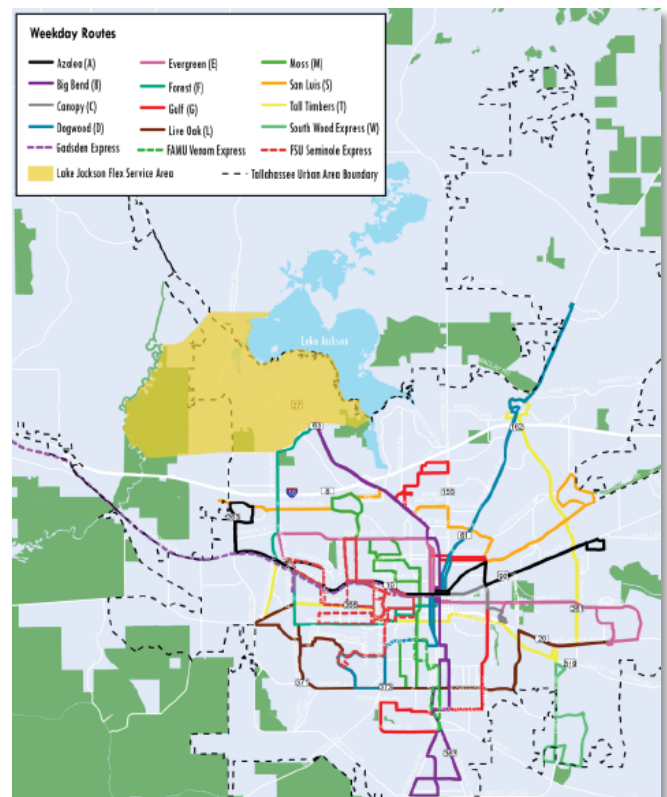
Fixed-Route Transit Service Profile

The fixed-route profile provides a more detailed summary and depictions, as shown in Figure 3-4, of current fixed-route transit services and should include the following details:

- Descriptions of all types of fixed-route services provided, including fixed or flex route bus, fixed guideway, bus rapid transit (BRT), commuter rail, and light rail, among other modes;
- Route-level profiles of the fixed-route services with a description of the primary route functions and maps of the service area with route overlays, which highlight the walk-access and complementary ADA-paratransit access areas;
- Route-level reviews of the current level of service provided (e.g., days of service, service spans, service frequencies, etc.); and
- Route-level and system-wide performance data for the most current year available (e.g., ridership, miles, passengers/mile, passengers/hour, revenue, etc.).

A detailed overview of the services provided by the transit agency helps set the context for the subsequent performance evaluations.

Figure 3-4: Service Area Map with Route Overlay



Source: StartMetro TDP/City of Tallahassee, 2016

Figures 3-5 and 3-6 provide summaries of fixed-route system characteristics that could be included in this section. Figures 3-7 and 3-8 show examples of graphical displays/maps that also could be used to illustrate system-specific information. Visualizing the service frequency and ridership in terms of bus stop activity, as shown in these examples, also can enhance how this information contributes to a base-level summary of any current fixed-route transit network.

Route Performance Evaluation

A step beyond profiling routes in the network, the inclusion of a brief performance evaluation and ranking of the routes by key metrics will further clarify the current state of the transit system. Figure 3-6 also provides an example of ranking routes in terms of passengers per revenue hour, a key measure of service productivity. These basic operational evaluations can enable planners to identify the current strengths and weaknesses of the network by route without becoming too encumbered by the numbers.

Using Available Data to Paint a Picture

Next Stop Next Steps TDP, Hillsborough County, FL

Showing existing service performance along with the annual goals, using already tracked and available operational data, is an example of an agency putting its ongoing analysis efforts to best use. HART used data from its Key Performance Indicator tracking process in its TDP to show its existing performance and trends in relation to established agency benchmarks.

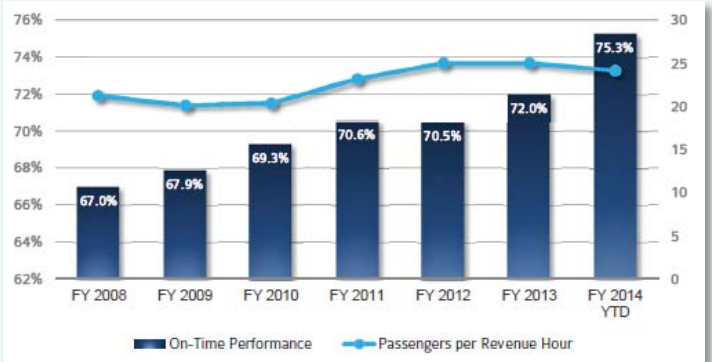


Figure 3-5: Service Characteristics by Route

Route No.	Route Name	Peak Headway	Off-Peak Headway	Evening/Night Headway	Hours
1	Florida Ave	Weekday 20 min Weekend 30 min	Weekday 20 min Weekend 30 min	Weekday 15-60 min Weekend 15-50 min	Weekday 4:00 AM – 1:01 AM Saturday 6:15 AM – 11:05 PM Sunday 6:15 AM – 9:24 PM
2	Nebraska Ave	Weekday 30 min Weekend 30 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 30 min	Weekday 30-60 min Weekend 30-60 min	Weekday 4:25 AM – 12:53 AM Weekend 5:15 AM – 12:52 AM
4	Palma Ceia/ South Tampa	Weekday 60 min	Weekday 60 min	Weekday 60 min	Weekday 5:45 AM – 8:37 PM
5	40 th Street	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30-60 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 5:05 AM – 12:47 AM Weekend 6:35 AM – 10:18 PM
6	56 th Street	Weekday 20-30 min Weekend 30 min	Weekday 10-25 min Weekend 25-35 min	Weekday 25-50 min Weekend 35-70 min	Weekday 4:50 AM – 1:25 AM Weekend 6:15 AM – 1:09 AM
7	West Tampa/ Citrus Park	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	
8	Progress Village/ Brandon	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	
9	15 th Street	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	
10	Cypress Street	Weekday 60 min	Weekday 60 min	Weekday 60 min	
12	22 nd Street	Weekday 20 min Weekend 30 min	Weekday 20 min Weekend 30 min	Weekday 20 min Weekend 30 min	
14	Armenia Ave	Weekday 45-65 min Saturday 30-50	Weekday 45-60 min Saturday 40-55 min	Weekday 45-60 min Saturday 40-55 min	
15	Columbus Drive	Weekday 25-40 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 25-30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 25-30 min Weekend 60 min	
16	Waters Ave	Weekday 40-55 min Saturday 40 min	Weekday 40-45 min Saturday 40 min	Weekday 40-45 min Saturday 40 min	
18	30 th Street	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	
19	Port Tampa	Weekday 20-30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min	

Note: Peak headways are defined as follows:

Source: Hillsborough County TDP, 2017

Figure 3-6: Annual Performance Data by Route

Route #	Description	Passenger Trips	Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours	Passengers per Revenue Mile	Vehicles Required	Passengers per Revenue Hour	Rank of Pass./Rev. Hour	% Above or Below System Average
Anna Maria Island Trolley									
99	US 41	222,030	120,150	9,104	1.85	2	24.39	2	95.6%
6	Cortez Road	140,280	134,362	9,532	1.04	2	14.72	3	18.0%
2	East Bradenton	61,676	53,058	4,215	1.16	1	14.63	4	17.3%
8	Oneco – Bayshore Gardens	58,629	61,634	4,113	0.95	1	14.26	5	14.4%
16	15th Street East	57,652	67,403	4,120	0.86	1	13.99	6	12.2%
Beach Express Trolley									
3	Manatee Avenue	162,543	199,053	12,269	0.82	4	13.25	8	6.3%
9	9th Avenue West	44,658	43,267	3,505	1.03	1	12.74	9	2.2%
1	Ellenton Outlet Mall	63,792	92,620	6,246	0.69	1	10.21	10	-18.1%
4	9th Avenue East and West	79,909	123,135	8,445	0.65	2	9.46	11	-24.1%
201	North County ConneXion	17,998	32,385	2,159	0.56	1	8.34	12	-33.1%
13	Palmetto	30,055	40,387	3,829	0.74	1	7.85	13	-37.0%
Longboat Key Trolley ²									
12	SR 70	63,510	3,846	0.4	1	3.63	25,482	15	-70.9%
203	Skyway ConneXion ³	34,841	1,738	0.12	1	2.33	4,043	16	-81.3%
System Average		93,415	84,691	5,734	0.87	-	12.47	-	-
Totals ⁴		1,494,636	1,355,051	91,749	-	24	-	-	-

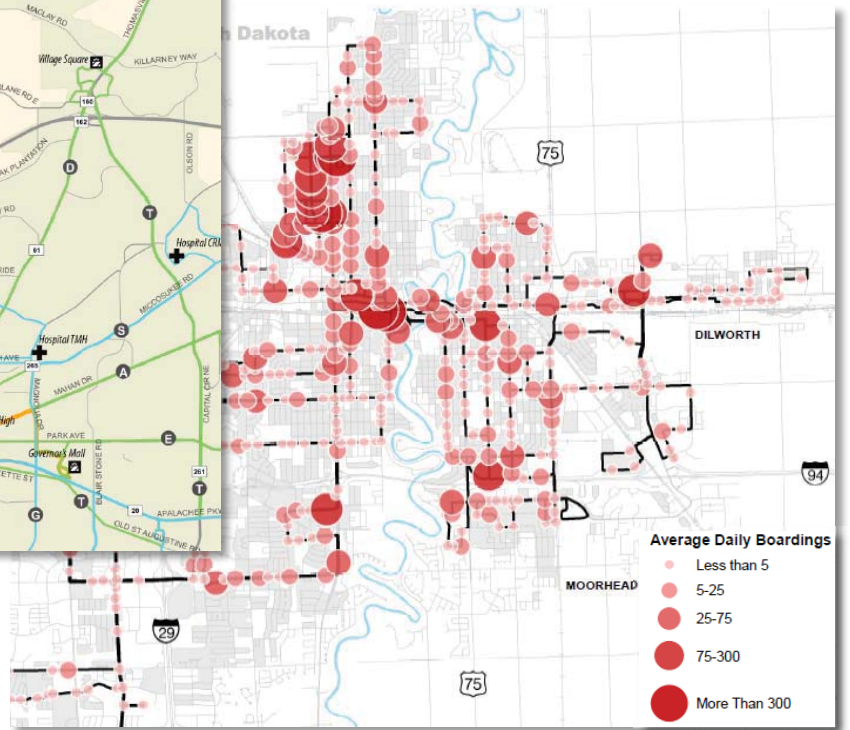
Source: Manatee County TDP, 2018



Source: Leon County TDP, 2015

Figure 3-8: Boarding and Alighting Locations with Route Overlay

Figure 3-7: System Map by Route Frequency



Source: Fargo (ND), TDP, 2015

ADA Paratransit Service Profile

In addition to fixed-route services, the TDP should include an overview of the FTA-required complementary ADA paratransit service, whether it is directly operated by the transit agency or contracted to another service provider. Persons may be eligible for this service if they live within 3/4-mile of a local bus route and have physical, cognitive, emotional, visual, or other disabilities that prevent them from using the fixed-route bus system, either permanently or under certain conditions.

It is important for agencies to understand the rider segments that may utilize the paratransit service either as a complement or substitute to the fixed-route network.

Capital/Infrastructure Overview

In addition to a closer look at the current transportation services and characteristics, it is important to conduct a brief audit of the facilities owned or operated by, or at least available to, the transit agency. System facilities

relevant to the TDP range from bus stop amenities, such as benches, shelters, and bike racks, to major transfer centers, park-and-ride lots, and administration/operations and fleet facilities. Developing an inventory of these facilities strengthens the understanding of the resources available to the agency as it strives to provide quality transit services.

At a minimum, it is important to produce a simple inventory of these facilities, to the extent such data are available. If readily available, some descriptive attributes about the facilities should be included such as their quantity (e.g., bus stops, shelters), location, size/capacity (e.g., bus bays, fuel filling stations, parking spaces), and others as appropriate. However, additional information could be helpful for understanding the potential need for expanded and/or additional facilities (e.g., condition of facilities and extent utilized), as well as determining the current utilization of facilities by particular routes.

For instance, some transit agencies have found benefit in categorizing bus stops based on the number of routes that utilize a given stop, the number of daily boardings per stop, and existence of other passenger amenities provided at a given stop in order to prioritize future installations and improvements. These inventories then can be leveraged later in the TDP as part of the capital recommendations section.

In addition, developing a facility inventory as part of the TDP can be a task that can inform or be expedited by a Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan for the transit agency. While many agencies are currently developing their first TAM plans, or about to, the information in the facility inventory can provide insights into utilizing facilities in ways that the TDP process may not have been able to envision previously.

Other Providers of Public Transportation

A description of other transportation services provided in the study area should be the final context reviewed for the summary of current transportation services.

A concise review of other public transportation providers, including private transportation providers, regional transportation services (i.e., interstate bus and rail services), commuter transportation services (i.e., vanpools), and any known app-based ride-hailing services that mimic transit (i.e., Uber Express Pool) also should be summarized to the extent possible.

System Performance Evaluation

Each public transit agency will have collected data covering all aspects of the system – operations, maintenance, and finance. Data such as passenger trips, revenue miles and hours, number of vehicles operated in maximum service, fare revenue, operating expenses, and subsidy per trip are just a few variables that may be collected on a system- and route-level.

Mini Operational Assessment

While reviewing system performance, incorporating small elements of route-level performance and productivity analysis into a TDP can provide some beneficial operational data on a budget. However, this should not preclude agencies from conducting comprehensive operational analyses every few years, which are necessary for a more in-depth look into potential efficiency adjustments.



Transit planners and management use these data to evaluate the performance of their system and routes on a daily, monthly, quarterly, and/or annual basis. The performance evaluation component of the TDP provides an additional opportunity every five years to analyze, or, at a minimum, assess and look into the potential need for further analysis of, the overall system over time and also compare it to its peer systems.

A performance evaluation of a transit agency's current service typically involves two main components: an analysis of the system's performance over a specified time frame (trend analysis) and the comparison of performance with other systems that have similar operating characteristics (peer review analysis). These two components of assessing transit performance are further described below, including the types of data sources needed to accomplish them.

Data Sources

The data available from the National Transit Database (NTD) is the recommended data source, combined with data from the transit agency for the most recent years when validated NTD data are not available. NTD is a standardized Federal program that requires U.S. public transit agencies that receive Federal funds to submit annual statistics about their respective systems. The data are subject to considerable review and validation by the FTA before approval and release to the public (via the NTD

website) in the form of tables and profiles. The reason for preferring the use of NTD data is that the data are collected using a standardized methodology developed to allow for comparative analysis of performance characteristics. The final data can be accessed through the Florida Transit Information System (FTIS), a user-friendly online database tool designed specifically for obtaining and analyzing the NTD data for transit planning applications.

Trend Analysis

The purpose of trend analysis is to understand how a transit system's performance has changed over time. Once again, NTD data are the most logical basis for comparison. When conducting a trend analysis, it is necessary to assess the data over several years, three at a minimum, but a five-year trend analysis is recommended.

Peer Review Analysis

A peer group analysis compares a transit system's performance with that of similar transit systems. Characteristics of the transit system can be compared with similar systems in Florida and nationally. Selecting peer systems is discussed later but are generally defined by similar service characteristics and geographic location (typically southeastern U.S.), but there are other NTD or non-NTD variables that may prove useful in selecting suitable peer systems. Such measures may include but are not limited to: county population/population density and specific geographic or community attributes such as age, topography, and/or presence of a major university within the service area.

Recommended Performance Measures

In conducting peer and trend analyses, agencies should refer to Table 3-3 for the recommended general system indicators and efficiency and effectiveness measures. Depending upon its unique circumstances, a transit system may wish to add or subtract measures from this suggested list for its own fixed-route performance evaluation.

Data Source Options

While the data available from the NTD is recommended for use in this component, validated NTD data for the most recent year of analysis may not be available in FTIS or on the NTD website due to data submittal/processing delays. If so, agencies may use draft or un-validated performance data available that will later be submitted to the NTD in order to include more recent data in the TDP.



If an agency wishes to evaluate paratransit performance, too, they may use an abbreviated version of this list due to the limited availability of such data for this mode.

With performance measures selected and data collected, a series of tables and figures can be developed to depict the agency's performance for a specific measure statistically and graphically over time.

Peer Selection Process

While there are a handful of methodologies available for selecting peer systems, utilizing the standardized methodology provided in Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 141 (www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/163872.aspx) is largely considered to be a best practice. Outside of this methodology, there is a convergence of general guidelines to follow so that the selected peers will be comparable to the system being evaluated. First, an agency must decide what types of systems with which it would like to be compared. For example, if an agency's main customer base is students in a university area, it would make sense to compare the agency's performance to other cities with large student populations. Another example would be a "new start" system. The agency might want to limit its peer selection to only systems that have started service within the last "X" number of years.

Unless an agency wants to define a peer selection method based on its unique needs, the default method recommended is using the TCRP-based peer selection process, which is embedded in the peer selection tool provided on the FTIS website.

For agencies that lack baseline data from which to compare and identify peers for a peer analysis, a practice that has been adopted by some transit agencies consists of using key location-based variables that compare the conditions of the service areas and populations instead of looking at

Table 3-3: Florida Standard Performance Measures

General Measures	Effectiveness Measures	Efficiency Measures
Administrative Employee FTEs	Average Age of Fleet (in years)	Average Fare
Directly-Generated Non-Fare Revenue	Average Headway (in minutes)	Farebox Recovery (%)
Federal Contribution	Average Speed (RM/RH)	Local Revenue Per Operating Expense (%)
Local Contribution	Average Trip Length (in miles)	Maintenance Expense Per Operating Expense
Maintenance Employee FTEs	Number of Incidents	Maintenance Expense Per Revenue Mile
Operating Employee FTEs	Number of Vehicle System Failures	Operating Expense Per Passenger Mile
Passenger Fare Revenues	Passenger Trips Per Revenue Hour	Operating Expense Per Passenger Trip
Passenger Miles	Passenger Trips Per Revenue Mile	Operating Expense Per Peak Vehicle
Passenger Trips	Passenger Trips Per Service Area Capita	Operating Expense Per Revenue Hour
Revenue Hours	Revenue Miles Between Failures	Operating Expense Per Revenue Mile
Revenue Miles	Revenue Miles Between Incidents	Operating Expense Per Service Area Capita
Route Miles	Revenue Miles Per Route Mile	Operating Revenue Per Operating Expense (%)
Service Area Population	Route Miles Per Square Mile of Service Area	Passenger Trips Per Employee FTE
Service Area Population Density	Vehicle Miles Per Service Area Capita	Revenue Hours Per Employee FTE
Service Area Size (square miles)	Weekday Span of Service (in hours)	Revenue Hours Per Total Vehicles
Spare Ratio (%)	<p><i>The trend analysis and peer review analysis should be tailored to each transit agency; however, the bolded measures are considered worthwhile inclusions.</i></p>	Revenue Miles Per Total Vehicles
State Contribution		Revenue Miles Per Vehicle Mile
State Population		Vehicle Hours Per Peak Vehicle
Total Capital Expense		Vehicle Miles Per Gallon
Total Employee FTEs		Vehicle Miles Per Kilowatt-Hour
Total Energy Consumed (KW-Hours)		Vehicle Miles Per Peak Vehicle
Total Gallons Consumed		
Total Local Revenue		
Total Maintenance Expense		
Total Operating Expense		
Vehicle Hours		
Vehicle Miles		
Vehicles Available for Max. Service		
Vehicles Operated in Max. Service		



FTIS FLORIDA TRANSIT
INFORMATION SYSTEM

FTIS provides data and tools for conducting performance evaluations and peer reviews. In fact, the peer selection process promoted is based on the methodology recommended in TCRP Report 141, a best practice for a standardized peer selection methodology.



the potential transit system's characteristics. Once a general peer selection philosophy is established, the specific variables from the NTD, Census, or other sources, can be selected.

Presenting the Findings

A sample figure for a performance measure analysis, in this case operating expense per revenue mile, is shown in Figure 3-9. The method of displaying the peer and trend data side-by-side for each measure is encouraged to enable a complete visualization of one particular measure at a time. For the peer graphic, it is recommended that the peer mean of the measure be depicted so that comparisons can be made against the average value.

A table each for general indicators, effectiveness measures, and efficiency measures should be provided for both trend and peer variables, as well as the side-by-side overviews for each of the variables analyzed. This information may be included in an appendix while a summary of the findings from the performance evaluation is included in the body of the TDP. Finally, significant trends and anomalies in the data should be highlighted and potential justification for those results provided.

Using Visuals to Present Peer Choices More Effectively

Next Stop Next Steps TDP, Hillsborough County, FL

It is important that the public and key stakeholders are able to understand the basic methodology behind key evaluation techniques. As part of this education emphasis, HART recently created a graphic designed to depict the peer selection process as part of its TDP. The TDP used an eight-variable selection method and the visuals helped HART easily explain its process.

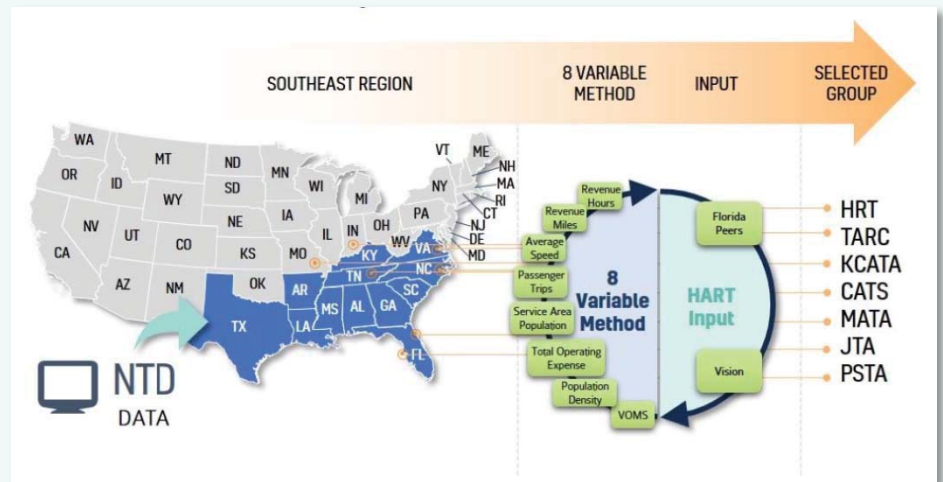
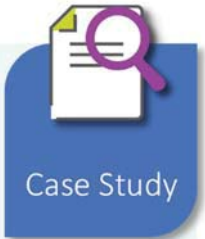
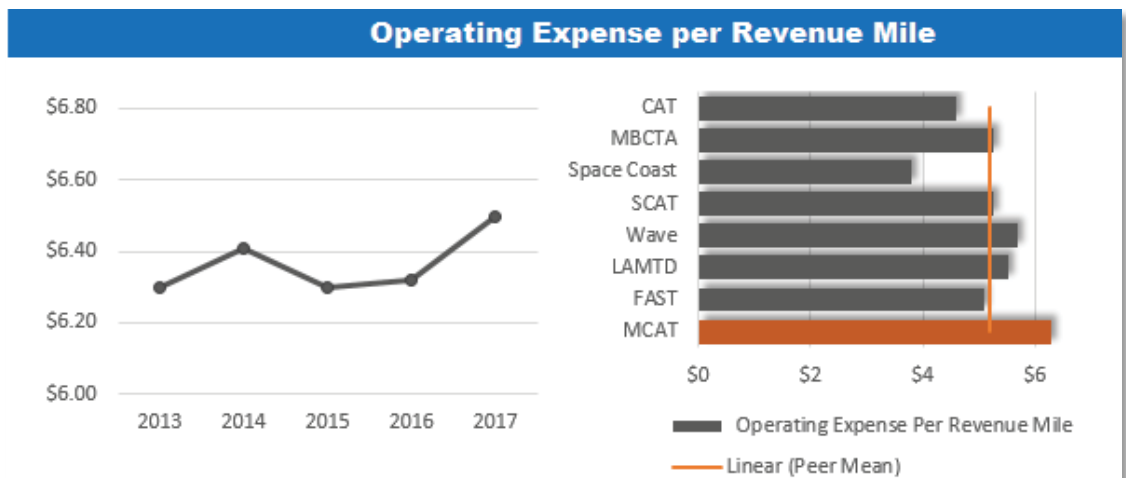


Figure 3-9: Trend/Peer Side-by-Side Overview



Source: Manatee County TDP, 2018

Aspirational Peer Review

An additional type of peer review is the aspirational peer review, which consists of selecting and comparing the performance of peer transit systems based on data that match the future aspirations of the operating area and transit system being analyzed. This forward-looking comparison is intended to provide an indication of the agency's future needs (i.e., potential level of service, operating costs) based on the projections (e.g., proxies provided by the aspirational peer group) of future performance data. This review is most useful in goal setting for a system, but it is also appropriate in areas with new transit systems and for those systems or areas experiencing rapid growth. Once the future goals and performance levels are identified, the peer selection process for future peers would generally be similar to that used for a regular peer analysis.

Identifying potential future, or aspirational, peers requires balancing the realities of the future projections for a study area with the idealistic goals of the agency. A future peer comparison should utilize multiple metrics for determining the list of potential peers to benchmark performance against. Additionally, the "Future Peer Comparison" Case Study provides an example of how a transit agency used this information, comparing the transit agency's performance to that of aspirational peers.

Farebox Report

An additional requirement for the TDP was added by the Florida Legislature in 2007 as part of House Bill 985. This legislation requires transit agencies to:

"... specifically address potential enhancements to productivity and performance which would have the effect of increasing farebox recovery ratio."

Subsequently, FDOT issued guidance requiring TDP major updates to include a summary report to meet this legislative requirement. As part of the farebox recovery ratio report, the topics that should be reviewed can be covered adequately in 1-2 pages and include the following:

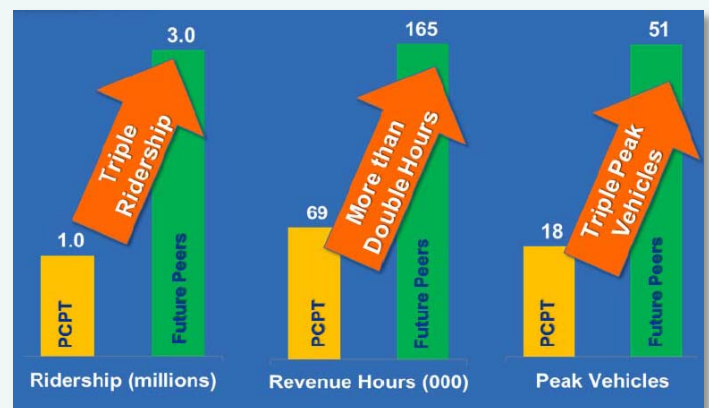
Future Peer Comparison

Access Pasco TDP Pasco County, FL



Direct peer comparisons are challenging to find because no two operating conditions are the same. Additionally, a transit agency may operate in a rapidly changing environment, for instance, in an area with rapid population growth.

This was the case for Pasco County and, unlike other transit agencies in Florida, the area faces a drastically different operating environment in the future. Therefore, PCPT conducted a second peer analysis intended to identify peer agencies that would be similar to PCPT in the future given certain growth projections and expansions in transit service. This enabled the agency to understand how population and employment changes may impact the demand for transit service.



- Current farebox recovery ratio;
- Review of previous fare studies and changes;
- Summary of any proposed changes for upcoming years; and
- Potential strategies to improve the ratio.

Performance Evaluation to Set Goals & Objectives

As previously mentioned, another potential use of performance evaluation is to help establish the agency's goals and objectives. A system can identify an area of deficiency based on the performance evaluation and define a specific goal and related objective to improve that particular measure.

For example, an agency's average age of fleet might be 10 years and 50 percent older than its peers. In this instance, an objective related to a reduction in the average age of fleet might be warranted. An example of how system performance measures may be incorporated into goals and objectives is provided in Figure 3-10.

Figure 3-10: Example of Performance-Based Goals, Objectives, and Measures

Goal 1: Improve Convenience, Reliability and Customer Service of Transit Services				
Objective	Measure	Target	Accomplishments	Status
1.3 - Improve transit service reliability	On-time performance of transit vehicles per mode	Metrorail – 95%	97%	▲
		Metrobus – 78%	74%	▼ *
		STS – 80%	88%	▲
	Percentage of missed pullouts	Agency target – 0%	0.2%	▼ **
	Achievement of mean distance between service failures	Metrorail – 39,000 miles	42,518	▲
		Metrobus – 4,000 miles	3,758	▼ ***
		Mover – 6,000 miles	7,302	▲

Source: Miami-Dade TDP, 2017

3.3 Public Involvement

The purpose of this section is to identify and demonstrate public involvement methods as they relate to the development of a TDP and to highlight the importance of incorporating the role of public opinion into the transit planning process. Public involvement efforts provide the critical support and basis for the completion of subsequent TDP components, as well as the realization of the following achievements:

- Obtaining information to ascertain community perceptions and expectations regarding local transit services;
- Gaining a thorough understanding of the local needs and desires for transit services that inform the development/update of a TDP's mission, vision, goals, objectives, and policies; and
- Generating useful feedback that provides a solid foundation and guidance for developing and prioritizing transit alternatives.

Additionally, a majority of transit operating and capital expenses are funded through Federal sources and a significant amount of Federal legislation emphasizes the crucial role of soliciting public involvement during transit planning efforts. For example, transportation legislation, such as Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), and, more recently, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, expands the list of recommended audiences to engage and increases the emphasis on the importance of outreach during multiple phases of a planning effort.

Objectives

The fundamental goal of public involvement for public transportation decision-making is to ensure that decisions regarding public transportation incorporate public participation and feedback. As evidenced by the trend in TDP budgets of including greater resource allocations for

3.3 Public Involvement	39
Objectives	39
TDP Public Involvement Plan ..	40
TDP Outreach Guide for Agencies	41
Key Regulatory Requirements	45
TDP Public Involvement Toolbox	46



Chapter
Contents

outreach efforts, it is critical to conduct meaningful outreach for the TDP.

Key objectives of the public outreach should be to:

- **Educate** – Present information to the public during outreach conducted early on and throughout the TDP development process by sharing information that is presented in nontechnical and comprehensible terms.
- **Solicit** – Collect public input throughout the TDP development process by comprehensively engaging the public through a variety of outreach efforts. The collection of complete and accurate public input increases the likelihood that stakeholders will agree with and benefit from a TDP's recommendations.
- **Integrate** – Incorporate public feedback into the TDP at various stages. Issues, comments, and concerns obtained through public outreach should be thoroughly addressed and documented in the TDP.
- **Monitor** – Review and adapt engagement practices prior to and during the TDP to maximize the benefits of public outreach. New ideas and strategies for soliciting and analyzing public input should be routinely incorporated to improve the process.
- **Promote** – Champion the role of public transportation within the community. The development of a TDP major update occurs only every five years, so agencies should seize the opportunity to elevate the role of

Table 3-4: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Public Involvement	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
Approved TDP Public Involvement Plan (PIP)*		
Establish TDP Technical Review Team (TRT)		
TDP Visioning with elected officials/boards		
Minimum 14-day notification for events open to the public		
Opportunities for public involvement outlined in PIP		
Solicit comments from regional workforce boards		
Advise FDOT, regional workforce board, MPO of public meetings**		
Provide review opportunities to FDOT, regional workforce board, MPO***		
Pre-TDP outreach and post-adoption public outreach		

*TDP PIP approved by FDOT, or the local MPO Public Participation Plan approved by both the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration.

**Advise FDOT, regional workforce board, and the MPO of all public meetings where the TDP is to be presented or discussed.

***Provide opportunities to FDOT, regional workforce board, and the MPO to review and comment on the TDP during the development of the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program.

public transportation within the community and build a consensus regarding improving transit services.

TDPs should solicit and incorporate the perspectives and needs of each audience who may be affected directly or indirectly by potential transit service changes and/or

improvements. However, despite the regulatory nature of public involvement, it is more important to consider another impetus of these regulations—public outreach can empower transit agencies to strategically improve services and support for public transit.

The understanding that public outreach is a vital part of this process and not simply a necessary labor should be a guiding principle throughout the design and execution of the outreach process.

TDP Public Involvement Plan

The first step of public outreach for the TDP is to develop a plan of action for public involvement. Florida transit agencies have the choice of either developing a specific TDP-focused Public Involvement Plan (PIP) or using an approved local MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP).

However, prior to initiating outreach, the PIP or PPP must be approved by FDOT. This involves the agency authoring a letter to the FDOT District representative and attaching a PIP specifically prepared for the TDP, or an MPO PPP, outlining the public involvement action plan and a tentative schedule for the TDP.

Specific FDOT requirements for public involvement processes for TDP preparation include:

- Obtaining public involvement plan approval from FDOT;
- Soliciting comments from the regional workforce board;
- Advising FDOT, the regional workforce board, and the MPO of all public meetings; and
- Providing FDOT, the regional workforce board, and the MPO an opportunity to review and comment during the development of the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program.

The development of a robust PIP that is customized to the unique goals and constraints of the TDP and the agency's

operating environment is strongly encouraged in order to maximize the resources dedicated to reaching meaningful audiences.

TDP Outreach Guide for Agencies

Establish Technical Review Team (TRT)

While not required, a TRT can be established early in the TDP development process and structured analogous to that of a project oversight team to help guide the overall TDP process, including public involvement, from a bird's-eye view. A TRT may be composed of representatives from the transit agency, the local MPO, FDOT District Office, the regional workforce board, city/county officials, and/or community stakeholders; however, the total size of the team should be limited to about five to seven members to ensure that the benefits of the TRT are not encumbered by too many voices and the team remains sufficiently agile to enable the efficient execution of the TDP.

Start Early

At the onset of any planning effort, it is beneficial to inform the public and stakeholders about the effort and educate them on its purpose. This holds especially true for a TDP, so

Use PIP or MPO's Outreach Plan?

A transit agency preparing a TDP is encouraged to develop its own PIP (even if it is brief) and reserve the adoption of an MPO PPP as a last resort. Typically, MPO PPPs are designed to address a host of transportation planning efforts for a wide variety of modes (i.e., highway, bicycle, pedestrian, etc.), and sometimes may not even have sufficient transit-specific guidance to support TDP preparation.



it will be important to schedule a set of outreach activities early in the TDP process. This will support the education process, as well as gather initial input that can be fed into developing a more complete set of transit needs as part of the visioning process and in subsequent components of the TDP, including appropriate reflection in any proposed potential service alternatives. Collecting input early in the TDP process is an effective means of ensuring that the plan is properly informed at the same time that the public is properly educated.



Source: Marion County TDP, 2017

Ensure Inclusive Representation

The engagement of a diverse cross-section of the population is paramount to ensuring that a TDP meets all of a community's needs. This means that information must be communicated bilaterally during the TDP outreach process and that both the general and underserved/under-represented segments of the community are solicited.

Involving a good representation of members from across the general citizenry would help ensure an engagement process with ethnic, racial, and economic diversity. This not only would help improve the identification of needs, but also can help garner broader community support and more credibility with elected officials, increasing the chances of a successful TDP implementation.

Strategize Location Selection

The selection of an event location and time is key to ensuring greater participation, ease of access, and even a diverse set of perspectives. The types of outreach events and dispersion of the events throughout the study area are important dimensions for ensuring that all areas of the community have the opportunity to provide input. Agencies also must ensure that the locations selected for events to which the general public is invited are accessible by a current transit route and that the event is conducted during service hours. Additionally, while the outreach events can be conducted as standalone events, the process can benefit from “piggy-backing” off of other already planned community events, such as county fairs, farmers markets, art festivals, seasonal events, etc.

Leverage Technology

The proliferation of new technologies and their growing adoption by transit agencies opens up opportunities for public outreach in a variety of ways. Not only do many technologies reduce the potential costs associated with outreach (e.g., online surveys), but they also enable the inclusion of new audiences in the outreach process and can help improve communication through visual

Impact of TDP Branding

My Ride TDP, Polk County, FL

In Polk County, prior to a general public survey conducted in 2013 as part of the My Ride branding campaign, 90 percent of respondents had not heard of the plan or its predecessors. After the campaign, this number fell substantially, suggesting a greater familiarity with the transit agency. Furthermore, over three-quarters of respondents agreed that the plan and the branding effort were good ideas. Plan branding makes the unfamiliar notion of a TDP more accessible and memorable for all public participants regardless of their background.



Case Study

techniques. For example, the use of Facebook Live can expand public workshop audiences at a negligible cost to the agency.

Use Branding

Transit uses many acronyms and most, like the TDP, are not understood by the general public. The creation and adoption of a brand for a TDP helps to make the project more memorable and accessible to the public. Public officials and transit agencies often remark that branding opens up the discussion with the public and prompts questions, therefore, engaging the community readily and easily. Additionally, when the brand is subsequently used

as part of future communications and projects for the transit system, it promotes a cohesive identity that riders and citizens can recognize.

Branding images can be emblazoned on reports, handouts, meeting notices, custom project “swag,” and even clothing. In recent years, transit agencies across the state have employed branding tactics as part of their TDP updates and continued the use of these marketable identities afterward to great avail. The greater the support and recognition of the public transit system’s value that outreach can create, the better.

Engage Elected Officials

By including local political leaders in the outreach process, TDPs can educate leaders on the needs of the community and potential transit improvements, as well as solicit their own informed feedback regarding other unmet needs. Engaging political leaders in all phases of TDP outreach, especially through the use of one-on-one interviews and visioning workshops is important to ensuring that these leaders understand the plan. Additionally, these efforts will contribute toward building consensus and eventually securing their support, either formally or informally, for the TDP’s recommendations.

Creating and preserving local allies for the TDP is a helpful approach for ensuring that recommendations developed to meet the needs of the community are adopted. Separately conducting and summarizing outreach with political leaders can ensure that the concerns of these key stakeholders are appropriately recorded and incorporated into the TDP’s recommendations, as well. All of this also goes a long way in building local champions for transit who can lead the charge when additional local funding is needed.

Rely on a Toolbox Approach

Depending on the nature of the transit system and the study area, as well as the size of the TDP’s budget, it is best for agencies to select and employ outreach practices

TDP Branding Helps!!



Transit agencies are increasingly creating and adopting a brand for their TDPs, which may or may not be coordinated with other general branding efforts for the agency. However, in accordance with general marketing principles, more coordinated efforts are more recognizable and may produce greater awareness. Additionally, the benefits of creating a brand for a TDP include re-use of the brand for future TDPs (i.e., major updates and APRs), which provides continuity and a banner for ongoing public efforts that continue beyond the TDP development period.

from a “toolbox” of possible activities. Together, the eventually selected activities should cumulatively aim to solicit a balanced representation of the public’s perceptions and needs with regard to public transportation. Picking and choosing activities that best balance the goals and constraints of the agency and the TDP can ensure that a one-size-fits-all approach to public outreach is not blindly pursued.

Consult Research

Despite the uniqueness of every community, in all likelihood, another transit agency has likely faced a similar set of needs and challenges during its own public outreach efforts. Therefore, relying on research and reports that provide case studies of effective outreach activities is another key way of maximizing resources dedicated to public engagement.

Add a New “Phase Zero” for Outreach

An established best practice employed by agencies is to divide public outreach efforts for TDPs into two distinct phases, Phase I and Phase II. This division roughly occurs between the initial needs identification phase (Phase I)

and the review/prioritization of the recommended alternatives phase (Phase II). However, an emerging best practice consists of conducting pre-outreach efforts, or “Phase Zero,” which take place prior to Phase I, wherein agencies can “zero-in” on any recently completed public outreach, whether by the agency itself or another entity, that may be relevant to the TDP. This new “Phase Zero” is not a requirement for TDPs, but this best practice may provide cost saving opportunities for the agency. For instance, if an onboard survey was recently completed for another planning effort, then the agency can prioritize the collection of non-rider feedback during the TDP outreach efforts. However, this phase may not be feasible if such recent data are not available or agency resources are limited.

Use Right Timing & Channels

Agencies should plan TDP outreach events not to coincide with national or local holidays, such as spring breaks. The resources that agencies typically have for outreach are limited and, therefore, careful timing may be necessary to maximize the “bang for the buck.”

Once the timing is set to maximize participation, using the right channels to reach the target audience also is key. This can range from the use of flyers and other printed or displayed media, such as advertisements in periodicals to billboards or flyers on-board buses and even variable message signs in order to notify and attract participants to public workshops. Other effective channels to use, regardless of whether an event is open to the public or invite-only, include phone calls, email, text, Facebook Private messaging, and handing out business cards with event/web links and/or QR codes.

With regard to providing advance notifications for events open to the public, a 14-day minimum window is recommended to allow the word to reach the intended audience. More advance notice may be beneficial; however, it should not be over 3-4 weeks as too much of a

Diversifying the Discussion

Access Pasco TDP, Pasco County, FL

Stimulating productive, critical discussion about a community’s need for transit is no easy task. The increasing diversity of our communities only makes this task more challenging.

In Pasco County, PCPT took the approach of forming four separate TDP discussion groups, each designed to solicit the perspectives of a different subset of the community. For instance, medical and social service providers, education and business development representatives, bus operators, and the MPO’s Citizen Advisory Committee were the four groups used in PCPT’s most recent TDP outreach. Each of these discussion group sessions yielded productive discussion about the community’s transit needs from different perspectives and, therefore, provided PCPT more robust public feedback.

gap also may be counter productive unless it is done with a reminder in the interim.

Conduct Post-Adoption TDP Outreach

It is often the case that planning efforts “lose steam” once they have been completed, destined to find a final resting place on an office shelf or archived on some computer hard drive. This should not be the case, and this sad demise can be avoided for a TDP by continuing its outreach efforts after the TDP has been adopted. Such ongoing outreach efforts, which would have additional intrinsic benefit for the transit agency anyway, can take many shapes, ranging from simple grassroots efforts to continue identifying patron needs, to comprehensive rider education programs about the service changes implemented through the TDP. Regardless of the



techniques used, the outreach should be designed to continually engage the public about the progress being made to implement the various service recommendations from the TDP, as well as to continually ensure that the various needs identified during the major update effort are the most pertinent needs to address. This will be a key means of ensuring that the TDP is put to good use and that its overall implementation plan continues to be logically functional and well-received by the public and stakeholders alike.

Post-adoption TDP outreach can be facilitated as simply as by leveraging the branding campaign or general marketing collateral generated during the TDP. The use of the various TDP products, such as a concise executive summary report, can help elevate the TDP's recommendations so that they may come to fruition in support of achieving the community's goals. Similar to a new "Phase Zero," this post-adoption outreach phase also is a best practice and not required. In essence, the value of post-adoption TDP outreach consists of continuing the relationships and dialogue initiated during the plan development process in order to help eventually achieve the recommended service improvements and changes, and will be discussed further in Section 3.9.

Evaluation

No comprehensive public outreach campaign can be considered truly complete unless the agency has documented a process for evaluating the campaign's effectiveness and recording potential means of improving the tactics employed for use by future outreach planners. Some TDPs have even specified the need to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach at a point during the TDP itself in order to ensure that the maximum benefits are achieved. Possible evaluation measures include the number of attendees, comments, views, the compilation of meeting summaries, and dispersion of attendees by attribute (i.e., zip code).

Keep Key Players "In the Loop"



FDOT – The State transportation agency. Approves all TDP documents.

MPO – Regional transportation planning agency. Integrates TDP improvements into the regional LRTP.

Regional Workforce Board – Carries out Florida's workforce policy and programs as established by Florida Statutes. Ensures local workforce transportation needs are adequately met by local public transportation services. (More information on Regional Workforce Boards is available at <http://www.floridajobs.org/onestop/onestopdir/>)

Governing Board – While not a rule requirement, it always helps to keep the transit agency's governing board abreast of the TDP activities. This may help make the TDP a more collaborative effort and facilitate its final adoption process.

Other Stakeholders – Community leaders, elected and informal, have significant influence over public opinion, as well as rich insight into community needs.

Key Regulatory Requirements

In addition to what is required per TDP Rule, there are a few more general regulatory requirements that are worth noting to assist agencies in the conduct of public outreach for TDPs:

- Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 mandates non-discrimination by race, color, or national origin in connection with programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance.
- Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 also requires access to information and services for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

- Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice (1994) requires measures to avoid disproportionately high adverse environmental effects of Federal programs through full and fair participation of low-income and minority communities.
- Chapter 286, Florida Statutes (a.k.a. Florida Sunshine Law) demands public access to governmental meetings at the state and local levels and demands meetings of boards and commissions to be open to the public, adequately noticed, and recorded via minutes.

Any TDP public involvement strategies used by transit agencies should comply with such rules and regulations, as applicable.

TDP Public Involvement Toolbox

There are numerous public input activities and strategies that can be used to engage the community and gather public feedback on transportation planning, in general. To help provide some focus, those public involvement activities and strategies that are most suitable and applicable for the TDP development process are discussed next.

Table 3-5 provides a toolbox of potential outreach strategies and highlights the ideal TDP outreach phases each is best suited for, as well as a relative cost and participation potential for each activity. Appendix B provides detailed descriptions of each of these strategies.

Public transit agencies may refer to this matrix to determine the most appropriate public outreach events to use during the TDP development process based on their specific objectives and resource limitations.



Case Study

Transit Planning Charrette

Manatee Connect TDP, Manatee County, FL

Community and business leaders possess valuable opinions and influence that can aid transit agencies plan for future service and develop partnerships of varying scale. The birds-eye view and longer term perspective afforded by these stakeholders can help strengthen a transit plan.



In Manatee County, MCAT has conducted a charrette activity in both of its most

recent TDP major updates to great avail. The charrettes have allowed stakeholders to work together and share ideas in a manner that individual discussions could not support. In addition to generating new ideas, the charrette process has raised the profile of transit and laid the foundation for partnerships and cross-marketing promotions for MCAT to build upon in its TDP and beyond.



Case Study

Event Piggy-Backing



























BCT Connected TDP, Broward County, FL

Engaging the public is no easy task, especially when it comes to reaching non-riders. There is a wide spectrum of travel needs and opinions and preferences on travel, including transit, so capturing all of these views is a perpetual challenge.

In Broward County, Broward County Transit (BCT) embraced the approach of “piggy-backing” on already planned events and found great success for comparably minimal cost. BCT hosted numerous community drop-in events, including at the Lauderhill Mall, Marando Farms Green Market, and Miramar Green Market, and a number of other locations. BCT participated in these already scheduled and advertised events, where BCT set up presentation boards, distributed surveys, and had staff speak with event participants.



Table 3-5: TDP Public Involvement Toolbox

	Outreach Phase				Relative Cost	Relative Effort	Participation Potential
	Zero	One	Two	Post-TDP			
TDP Technical Review Team					Low	Low	
Stakeholder Interviews					Medium	Medium	
Open House Public Workshops					High	Medium	
Traditional Public Workshops					High	High	
Board Visioning Workshops					Medium	Medium	
Transit Planning Charrettes					High	High	
Discussion Groups					High	High	
Bus Operator Interviews					Low	Low	
Meeting in a Box					Medium	Medium	
Grassroots Outreach					Medium	Medium	
Social Media					Low	Low	
Agency Websites					Low/Med	Low/Med	
Email Blasts					Low	Low	
Facebook Live					Low	Low	
Newspaper/Media					Low	Low	
Public Outreach Software					High	Low/Med	
On-Going Comments					Low	Low	
Committee/Board Meetings					Medium	Medium	
Surveys							
On-Board Bus Rider					High	High	
Bus Operator					Low	Low	
General Public – Online					Low	Low	
General Public – Paper					Low	Medium	
Employers/Employees					Medium	Medium	
Intercept					Medium	Medium	
Mail Out					Medium	Medium	
Telephone					Medium	Medium	

3.4 Situation Appraisal

Conducting a situation appraisal that analyzes the factors within and external to a transit system is a key requirement under the TDP Rule. In addition, it also helps the transit agency examine the strengths and weaknesses of the system, as well as any existing/potential threats and opportunities for the provision of its services.

Changing demographic and socioeconomic conditions within the community can affect the existing transit market, as well as offer new opportunities to serve potential customers. Ever-evolving technologies may present new avenues for transforming capital infrastructure and/or service delivery in ways that enhance mobility while also improving efficiencies. It also is important for the transit agency to keep apprised of and react to changes in its operating environment, as well as local governmental actions that can enhance, as well as hinder, the goal of operating an effective and efficient transit system.

Objectives

The objectives of a TDP situation appraisal is best defined in the TDP Rule itself, which requires that agencies analyze the following factors, at a minimum:

- *The effects of land use, state and local transportation plans, other governmental actions and policies, socioeconomic trends, organizational issues, and technology on the transit system.*
- *An estimation of the community's demand for transit service using the planning tools provided by the Department, or a Department-approved transit demand estimation technique with supporting demographic, land use, transportation, and transit data. The result of the transit demand estimation process shall be a ten-year annual projection of transit ridership.*
- *An assessment of the extent to which the land use and urban design patterns in the provider's service area*

3.4 Situation Appraisal	49
Objectives	49
Why a Situation Appraisal?	49
Elements of a Situation Appraisal	50



Chapter
Contents

support or hinder the efficient provision of transit service, including any efforts being undertaken by the provider or local land use authorities to foster a more transit-friendly operating environment.

Addressing these factors guides transit agencies on meeting the requirements, as well as conducting an effective situation appraisal effort that would help the development of a better 10-year strategic plan for transit.

A review of this information will allow the agency to determine how the aforementioned issues impact the current provision of transit service and how the future of the transit system may be affected by any challenges that exist.

Table 3-6 summarizes the elements of the situation appraisal as presented in this chapter and denotes whether the discussed element is part of the TDP Rule or is a best practice. The elements are presented in a proposed order of how they should be completed, depending on the specific nature of the TDP project.

Why a Situation Appraisal?

Transit systems do not have the ability to directly “plan” the community in which they operate. However, transit agencies do have the ability to help influence the way in which the community grows and changes throughout the years.

The first step toward achieving this influence is for transit agencies to understand the planning and land use processes that occur in the community and find ways to



Table 3-6: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Situation Appraisal	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
Plans and Policy	✓	
Socioeconomic Trends	✓	
Travel Behavior/Patterns		✓
Land Use	✓	
Community Feedback		✓
Organizational Issues	✓	
Technology/Innovation	✓	
Regional Coordination		✓
Funding		✓
Transit-Friendly Land Use and Urban Design Efforts	✓	
10-Year Transit Ridership Projections*	✓	

*This is included with the overall demand assessment in Section 3.6 - Transit Demand Assessment.

be involved as a stakeholder in these processes. This involves being an active partner with local governments, as well as with the private sector and broader community during the planning, designing, and construction of land use developments.

Elements of a Situation Appraisal

The fulfillment of the first of the TDP requirements for the situation appraisal largely consists of information collection, much of which was previously conducted for the preceding sections (i.e., Baseline Conditions, Public Outreach). The subsequent activities are the interpretive steps, first identifying the consequences of the initial data collection and assessments, and then exploring possible strategies for changing or mitigating the situation to the benefit of the transit system.

As previously shown in Table 3-6, a situation appraisal combines elements that meets the minimum requirements per TDP Rule with industry best practices to

Staying Consistent with Other Plans May Have Added Benefits

Most Florida transit agencies in today's planning environment already provide or may plan to provide services regionally, crossing their local borders. So, while a careful review of applicable regional plans will ensure that the TDP is relevant and well coordinated with the region, it also may open up avenues for regional funding sources, which sometimes may have greater prospects for securement than local sources.

help transit agencies better understand and respond to transit needs in the study area.

A key element of a strong situation appraisal going forward will be the findings related to the transit-friendly land use and urban design reviews.

Plans & Policy

The situation appraisal element helps transit agencies develop a thorough understanding of how other plans and policies interrelate, coordinate, and/or complement or contradict with the TDP's own goals and efforts.

During the TDP process, the transit agency should review the comprehensive plans of the county government(s) it serves, as well as any municipalities that are contained within the area of operation. In reviewing the comprehensive plans, transit agencies should look for and identify those goals, objectives, and policies that can enhance, as well as deter, the transit agency from operating in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

Types of plans that need to be reviewed include:

- Prior TDPs, city/county comprehensive plans within the agency service area, MPO LRTPs;
- State of Florida Transportation Plan and Regional Planning Council plans and reports; and
- Other relevant documents such as campus master plans, downtown master plans, Developments of Regional Impact, corridor studies, etc.

In addition, the review of relevant economic development plans also may provide insight to needs and opportunities for transit to complement these initiatives.

After reviewing the plans and identifying applicable goals, objectives, and policies, as well as implementation plans, the transit agency should consider how these policies/plans relate to its overall goals, objectives, and policies in the next decade. As such, those policies/plans found to be supportive of the transit system should be identified and noted within the TDP.

The TDP should strive to leverage or complement supportive goals. The identification of contradictory or competing goals and initiatives should trigger an opportunity to engage in participating and educating as a stakeholder when the contradictory/competing plan is updated or amended. Only then can the transit agency seek to recommend improvements to any policies or plans that are creating barriers for transit.

Socioeconomic Trends

The value of reviewing and appraising socioeconomic trends closely is the opportunity to identify key trends that may or may not be supportive of transit services. For instance, trends in population growth (as a whole and for minorities/low income segments), age distribution, vehicle ownership, level of income, and the locations of employment centers all can reveal opportunities for improving or expanding transit services. Conversely, socioeconomic trends also can reveal which areas may not

My Ride TDP

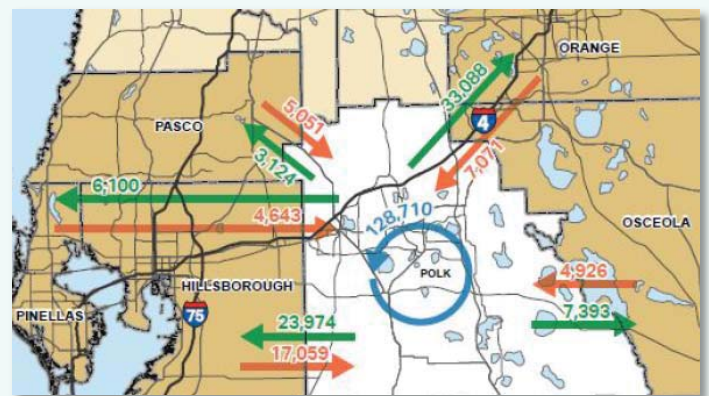
My Ride TDP, Polk County, FL

The situation appraisal is intended to be a flexible component of the TDP to the extent that it needs to be able to address the unique conditions of each transit agency's operating environment while still meeting the minimum required components as outlined in the TDP rule. The most recent TDP major update conducted for Polk County developed a situation appraisal component that thoroughly addressed the key elements of baseline data as well as topics relevant to the County's unique operating conditions. The key topics addressed within the situation appraisal include the following (★ denotes a topic above and beyond the requirements):

- Existing Land Use and Transportation Plans
- Socioeconomic Trends
- Commuting/Travel Patterns ★
- Land Use Patterns
- Activity Centers and Connectivity Analysis ★
- Multimodal Networks ★
- Existing System Analysis ★
- Safety and Operational Considerations ★
- Transit Ridership Estimates
- Technology and Innovation



Case Study



be experiencing conditions that are as supportive for transit service. Based on these trends, areas with potential mobility needs may come into better focus. For example, areas of high growth may be specifically considered during the development of service alternatives later in the TDP process.

Travel Behavior/Patterns

Taking a closer look at the data previously collected and summarized on travel patterns for the study area can help illuminate where transit service gaps exist or where latent demand may exist. Factors that may influence travel behaviors should be assessed within the context of promoting transit, such as commute flows between parts of the study area, as well as between other regional locations (e.g., county-to-county commute flows), mode split/share for transit, trends in commute lengths and durations, and levels of congestion, among others.

Land Use

Perhaps one of the most important ingredients for a successful transit system is effective local land use policies. In reviewing land use elements, transit agencies should be looking for strategies that encourage higher densities and/or mixed uses that can assist the transit agency in operating more efficiently. Areas with increased residential and commercial densities that promote walkability make mass transit more viable and efficient.

The notion of multimodalism – connectivity between the various modes of transportation to provide the seamless movement of people, goods, and services within a community – is a goal that many local governments can try to achieve via land use planning policies, many of which may aid in the delivery of transit service. Communities/areas with policies and strategies that promote bike trails and sidewalks connecting with transit stop locations, as well as connectivity between and among subdivisions and developments, provide valuable opportunities for the area transit agency to promote its services and make transit a viable alternative for those communities.

Synthesizing Implications

Use the situation appraisal to assess the key findings from the data, plans, and outreach information compiled in the early phases of the TDP. Determine their implications and identify challenges and opportunities for transit in the community for the next 10 years.



Community Feedback

Public involvement may be the most important component for developing a TDP that promotes the local community's visions for transit. As a result, it is a key element that needs to be assessed. While engagement with the public and stakeholders is an ongoing process until the TDP is completed, it is still critical to review and assess key trends revealed from the outreach conducted thus far for the TDP so that it may appropriately inform the situation appraisal.

This review should assess any recurring themes such as desires for more frequent service, particular gaps in the network, a need for more regional service, or even improved bus stop infrastructure. Integrating public feedback into the situation appraisal will help improve the sensitivity of initial transit recommendations in relation to the needs and preferences of the public.

Organizational Issues

The transit agency's organizational structure influences its ability to function effectively and efficiently in serving the needs of its patrons. A high-level review of the overall structure and governance of the transit agency, organizationally speaking, as well as its primary responsibilities (e.g., the transit agency is also the CTC), can provide insight into potential issues or barriers affecting the provision of quality transit services.

Furthermore, an organizational review also can help identify opportunities to build or strengthen relationships with other departments/agencies in order to work toward shared goals within the county or region.

Technology/Innovation

At this time, technological advances pervade a wide range of industries and seem to be announced on an increasingly frequent basis. As a result, technology has impacted transit services and the overall riding experience for passengers as never before. It now seems that, at any given time, transit agencies are likely in some phase of consideration, procurement, and/or implementation of technologies that will improve their services. Because of this, as well as the cost of many of these technologies, transit agencies must be strategic in their deliberations for adding new technologies that could support the provision of more efficient service, assist in providing better customer service, and/or generate invaluable data for future planning activities. Additionally, it is ideal for them to carefully consider the related overall costs for start-up, operation, and maintenance of any technology enhancements that may be desired.

The technologies described below are not the only advances available to transit agencies, but they are examples of technology advances that can assist the transit agency in providing effective, efficient service to its customers.

- **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)** – technologies include those related to fleet vehicles, customer experience, data collection, and new service modes. They can influence virtually any aspect of transit service.
- **Automated Vehicle/Connected Vehicle (AV/CV)** – technologies are beginning to have an impact on transit services. Currently, they are touted to improve customer experience and safety; however, there are many advancements in these technologies still on the horizon. As adoption costs decrease, transit agencies

should begin to consider how to incorporate these technologies to enhance and/or expand their services.

- **Transportation Network Companies (TNC)** – are an example of a new technology that offers a different type of service delivery. As discussed in prior TDP components, TNCs in some ways are seen as competitors to transit services; however, the experience of transit agencies who have proactively partnered with TNCs suggests the potential for complementary relationships. The ability to complement transit service, and possibly reach new areas and new transit markets, may be afforded by the exploration of these new service mode technologies.

Regional Coordination

Regional coordination and planning are only effective for transit if the TDP considers the priorities and goals expressed by nearby entities and their authored plans. A review of key priorities for regional entities, which may be discovered during the plan and policy review efforts, can identify areas of potential coordination. Outside of local plans, regional entities also can enact policies or express their intent to support services and programs that may be complementary to the transit agency's.

The TDP situation appraisal also should evaluate the extent to which the local MPO and the transit agency maintain open lines of communication and cooperation. This might include transit agency coordination with the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee, Citizen Advisory Committee, and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee to ensure that transit alternatives and needs are considered as these committees provide valuable input to the local planning process.

Additionally, coordination on upcoming actions such as studies and evaluations, piloted efforts, and teaming to acquire funding are other examples of how open regional cooperation can yield benefits for a transit agency.

Governmental Coordination

Many types of transit improvements involve the coordination of many layers of government, often at the federal, state, and local levels. The need for congruency of land use, road networks, and transit planning to support a successful public transit system often makes it necessary for multiple government agencies to collaborate in developing and operating transit services in a given area.

For instance, for such a desired synergy to occur, the local planning agency must design land use to induce pedestrian activity and transit ridership. The transportation engineering department must design the road networks to accommodate transit and non-motorized mobility. The transit agency must plan its system with development plans, road construction, and safety in mind. Each interdepartmental arrangement is different and, therefore, it is not possible to discuss every possible issue that may arise between agencies. However, it is important to remember that, for public transit to be successful, all involved agencies, whether on a city, county, or state level, must work together seamlessly and coordinate regularly.

Funding

In the evolving and uncertain landscape of transit funding, agencies must continually renew their efforts to identify new sources. In particular, by identifying more local sources of funding, additional new avenues to use as a match for leveraging State and Federal funds can be accessed. Any applicable local mechanisms such as impact fees, Transportation Increment Financing (TIF), ad-valorem taxes, mobility fees, private public partnerships, and other available mechanisms for the community to support transit should be discussed. In addition, agencies may want to also consider the experiences of nearby transit agencies, as well as bolster their efforts to market the benefits of improved or expanded transit services.

Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

2016 Pasco County Transit Infrastructure Design Manual



Case Study

PCPT has joined with the Pasco County MPO and Pasco County to develop a transit infrastructure design manual that incorporates transit service and policy recommendations developed as part of the 2013 PCPT TDP major update. The County continues to refine a process that would tie infrastructure elements and designs necessary for the recommendations developed in the TDP and 2040 LRTP, as well as future updates to the Land Development Code. This unique effort speaks to how a TDP's impacts can be maximized and potential coordination between land use and design regulations can result in new means of improving the attractiveness of transit services.

STEP

1

SELECT DEVELOPMENT TYPE

Use **PCPT Transit Infrastructure Recommendations Matrix** (Table 2-2) to select the type of development based on total non-residential square footage or number of dwelling units or a combination of both square footage and dwelling units for mixed-use developments for general development types, or applicability within a TOD, TND, or MUTRM.

STEP

2

REVIEW TRANSIT PLANS

Review/identify adopted transit improvements in the 10-Year Funded Transit Development Plan (TDP) or LRTP Cost Affordable Transit Plan. Build if service is funded in TDP within five years. Meet with PCPT to determine applicable infrastructure for services funded beyond five years.

STEP

3

IDENTIFY INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Use **PCPT's Transit Infrastructure Recommendations Matrix** to identify the infrastructure for each planned transit service type in the TDP and/or LRTP (local/express/BRT) and coordinate with PCPT/Pasco County Development Services staff to provide recommended infrastructure.

Transit-Friendly Land Use & Urban Design Efforts

This previously under-emphasized element of the situation appraisal should provide an assessment of the extent to which the land use and urban design patterns in the service area support or hinder the efficient provision of transit service, including any efforts being undertaken by the provider or local land use authorities to foster a more transit-friendly operating environment.

This effort involves identifying land use and urban design policies/efforts that might support the development of a more transit-friendly/transit-supportive land use and urban design environment, help align investment priorities such that investments in other modes of transportation are complementary rather than competitive, and coordinate the implementation of shared resources required to accomplish the vision laid out in the TDP.

Generally speaking, transit-supportive land use traits include greater density of development, features to support ease of access to and from transit, and features that give priority to modes that are alternatives to auto travel.

Review of Land Development Regulations

In addition, this element of the situation appraisal should include a review of existing Land Development Regulations related to transit to ensure that the transit agency has a “seat at the table” when it comes to land use and urban design decisions/discussion.

Identifying the specific local land use regulations that positively/negatively impact transit performance (e.g., parking minimums, parking exemptions, Transit-Oriented Development, mixed use, high density) can inform the TDP of possible opportunities or challenges to transit services.

10-Year Transit Ridership Projections

One of the requirements for a situation appraisal is an estimation of the community’s demand for transit service

Impact of Situation Appraisal

The findings of the situation appraisal should inform the TDP analysis, recommendations, and implementation plan. While the direct connection from the situation appraisal findings to the TDP results are not always clear, an effort should be made to help local decision-makers and stakeholders understand how the TDP integrates the findings from the situation appraisal to enhance the value of the goals and objectives, as well as the recommendations. Some agencies have included a table to assist in this effort (e.g., to summarize where the situation appraisal findings are used), while others have simply cited their use of the situation appraisal findings in later elements of the TDP.



using the planning tools provided by FDOT, or a Department-approved transit demand estimation technique with supporting demographic, land use, transportation, and transit data. While this demand estimation should be conducted about the same time as conducting the situation appraisal, it is most effective when used with the other demand and needs estimation tools/efforts, as summarized in Section 3.6 - Transit Demand Assessment. This will allow the transit agency to have access to all the tools and information on future needs to help develop a draft set of operating, capital, and policy needs in the subsequent sections of the TDP.

3.5 Goals & Objectives

Consistent with its strategic nature, the TDP serves to further the vision and mission of the transit agency by articulating goals, business objectives, and service performance expectations. Designed to evaluate the current situation, identify desired outcomes, and define the strategies or initiatives that will help achieve the agency's ideal future, the TDP should include carefully crafted goals, objectives, and policies.

Objectives

The goals and objectives will serve as the roadmap or guide for internal and external actions and initiatives that must be undertaken in order for the transit agency to “arrive” at its ideal future. Goals provide the foundation for the TDP.

- Establish goals and objectives that reflect community-wide goals for transit and the transit agency's vision of what it wants to be.
- Leverage existing goals and objectives as the starting point in the development or refinement of transit goals to promote continuity.
- Usher in a process of establishing transit goals that is ongoing. Goals must be revisited periodically to judge whether they continue to be useful and meaningful. In the preparation of the TDP, later findings may lead to a revision of goals and objectives. Revisions to goals might also take place in the APR process to update the plan.

Review of Situation Appraisal

It is paramount to consider both internal and external factors when developing goals and objectives, and the TDP situation appraisal provides that necessary foundation.

Agency staff should take the lead role in formulating the goals and objectives, and must consider the findings of the various data collection activities, such as those completed

3.5 Goals & Objectives	56
Objectives	56
Review of Situation Appraisal..	56
Coordinating with	
FDOT/Regional Workforce Board/MPO	57
TDP Visioning Process	57
Developing Vision & Mission.....	57
Developing Goals & Objectives.....	58
Tracking & Monitoring	59



Chapter
Contents

for baseline conditions, system performance, and public outreach. Supporting the desires of the broader community is extremely important to meeting the strategic intent of the TDP. Whether reviewed as part of the situation appraisal or not, key themes and findings from public outreach efforts should be important considerations for the development of the goals and objectives. Additionally, the expectations of the transit agency's governing body and any directives it has issued should be incorporated into the goals and objectives, as feasible.

Using the situation appraisal as the foundation for developing goals and objectives, key external factors that must be considered include local and regional planning documents that include transit-related goals and transit-supportive land use policies. Ideally, the transit agency's goals and objectives should not conflict with the transit-related goals, objectives, or policies found in the review of other planning documents.

In addition to consistency with the local government's planning documents, many communities have conducted broad-based community visioning exercises that identify and prioritize regional issues and priorities, often with a focus on growth management and transportation. These initiatives and other potential areas for regional coordination as identified in the situation appraisal also should be evaluated and incorporated into the agency's goals and objectives.

Table 3-7: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Goals & Objectives Element	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
Mission & Vision	✓	
Goals & Objectives	✓	
Guiding Principles		✓
Tracking & Monitoring	✓	

Beyond local planning efforts, the goals and objectives also should incorporate findings from the assessments of socioeconomic trends, travel behavior/patterns, and other baseline conditions information reviewed in the situation appraisal. Furthermore, factors internal to the agency, such as organizational challenges, funding outlook, and technology/innovation initiatives, are key dynamics that can help inform the development of goals and objectives.

Coordination with FDOT/Regional Workforce Board/MPO

While the agency staff should take the lead role in formulating the goals and objectives, they also must involve key partners/external organizations, such as the local workforce development board, FDOT, and the local MPO, to the greatest extent possible in the formulation of goals and objectives. This collaboration offers a greater likelihood of buy-in and ability to positively impact these organizations' constituents, and, in turn, support and complement the agency's overall vision and mission.

TDP Visioning Process

Many transit agencies already have established vision statements, though agencies with and without vision statements are finding value in engaging key local decision-makers in a visioning process to refine the ultimate guiding mantra for the TDP.

By working with local leaders, such as MPO boards and county commissions, early in the TDP process through meetings that incorporate presentations and polling

Opportunity to Develop/Update Agency's Vision



In charting a path for the next decade, a transit agency should use the TDP process as an opportunity to define, express, and/or update the vision of its role in the community. In the context of the TDP, the transit agency's vision must be firmly rooted in the community.

exercises, the agency can solicit initial guidance from these leaders with regard to the future of transit in the study area.

Developing Vision & Mission

The agency's vision and mission statements should be included in the TDP and utilized as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives, as they encapsulate the agency's purpose and its ideal future. The vision statement may have been developed/updated as part of a visioning process, or it may have emerged organically as the result of decisions regarding service priorities. A vision statement is typically a brief, broad, and inspiring statement about what the agency wants to achieve.

An agency also may have a mission statement, which presents a basic perspective of the overall purpose of the organization, the activities it conducts to serve that purpose, and the organizational values that guide its work. At its most basic level, the mission expresses how the agency will achieve its ultimate vision. Some agencies have adopted very simple mission statements, while others include more detail, but most include one or more elements related to public image, target markets, efficiency, products/services, and social responsibility.

Developing Goals & Objectives

Building upon the vision and mission statements, the agency must develop goals, objectives, and policies (e.g., strategies) for achieving its vision and fulfilling its mission as part of the TDP effort. The starting point for this task is the examination of findings and analysis of the tasks described in the previous sections, including: base data compilation, public involvement activities, system performance evaluation, and situation appraisal. In addition, any goals and objectives that the agency has prepared in the past, whether part of prior TDPs, special projects, or have been set for the agency in general, should be revisited to identify areas of potential modification or expansion based on current conditions.

The number and complexity of goals and objectives will vary significantly by the size and type of agency, but all should be related to its overall vision and mission whenever possible.

Sometimes included as part of the goals and objectives are a series of performance measures that are tied to the overall objectives, and sometimes even enumerated for individual policies/strategies, though most commonly only the objectives. Performance measures are a helpful way of tracking progress towards goals and objectives. Although they are not a necessary part of the goals and objectives component, they often can be helpful for examining agency progress when developing APRs. An example of a goal and associated objective and policy is provided in Table 3-8.

Policies, or strategies, are the specific actions that the agency is recommending it pursue in order to meet the established objectives in a manner consistent with any performance measures and, ultimately, the goals. Another common way to refer to strategies is “tactics,” but both are similarly defined as a specific action for the agency to take.

Leveraging a Vision

Charlotte Rides TDP Charlotte County, FL



Case Study

It is critical to ensure that the established and/or developed vision, and subsequent goals and objectives, accurately reflect the needs of the community and are based on a sound understanding of how the TDP can help an agency meet these needs.

Charlotte County, as part of its prior TDP update engaged its county commission in a robust visioning and education process. The intent of the TDP was to refine transit goals for the county and to identify potential services to be provided as part of the county’s first fixed-route services.

What TDP is Not



- Not a Budget
- Not a Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Not a binding agreement

Ok. What is it, then?



Table 3-8: Example Goal, Objective, and Policy

Goal
Increase transit service options.
Objective
Expand primary transit network beyond established corridors and consider new transit service types such as streetcar and BRT.
Policy
Prioritize new high-density residential and employment corridors.

Guiding Principles

Another related concept is that of principles, sometimes phrased in the form of “Guiding Principles,” which are really just extensions of a vision or mission that can serve to help frame the goals and objectives (e.g., “safety always comes first”). Principles are not considered to be a necessary component for TDP goals and objectives. However, it also is a fine practice for transit agencies to consider the application of guiding principles to help better define their vision, mission, and goals and objectives.

Tracking & Monitoring

Once the goals and objectives have been developed and evaluated for thoroughness and consistency, they need to be communicated to stakeholders. This includes the internal (i.e., employees) and external (i.e., governing board, local governments, and community leaders and organizations) stakeholders. The initial communication step would occur with the adoption and dissemination of the TDP to ensure that the anticipated outcomes are clear to all who will be responsible for conducting and supporting the agency’s business and fulfilling its mission. However, simply communicating the goals and objectives is not enough. It should be accompanied by a monitoring program to assist in measuring the agency’s success in achieving them, as well as identifying roadblocks that may hinder the achievement of its objectives.

The continuous refinement and communication of goals and objectives along with a regular monitoring program will enable the agency to adjust to a changing marketplace, identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, and reveal new opportunities for program and service excellence.

With a clear understanding of the agency’s vision, mission, goals, and objectives, and an expectation that performance is carefully monitored, both the employees

SMART Goals

A SMART goal is defined as one that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound, and because of this is more likely to be achieved. In crafting a SMART goal, keep the following questions in mind:

- **Specific** – What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?
- **Measurable** – How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached?
- **Achievable** – Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal?
- **Relevant** – What is the reason, purpose, or benefit of accomplishing the goal? What is the result (e.g., not activities leading up to the result) of the goal?
- **Time-Bound** – What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?



and the organizations that the agency relies on for support can be confident that its personnel are performing well and financial resources are well spent.

3.6 Transit Demand Assessment

This component of the TDP strives to quantify the mobility needs and develop transit demand estimates for the study area. Before the transit agency can begin to develop specific strategies to improve the transit system, there must be an accurate understanding of the existing demand for transit services and the level and type of unmet mobility needs within the community.

Objectives

Estimates of transit demand further attempt to quantify the extent of the public transit needs within the community. It is this accounting of transit demand and mobility needs that will serve as the basis upon which service alternatives/improvements will be developed within the TDP and eventually implemented if resources allow. The assessment of transit demand and mobility needs also will help ensure that identified service alternatives will be responsive to the needs of the community.

Developing an accurate estimate of demand is important because it enables an agency to gauge the benefits of its investments. The capacity to systematically estimate demand for service options enables transit planners to evaluate various service proposals and provide the information necessary for making informed tradeoffs concerning those service options.

Table 3-9: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Transit Demand Assessment	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
Traditional Markets		✓
Discretionary Markets		✓
Travel Markets		✓
Ridership Projections	✓	

3.6 Transit Demand Assessment ...60

Objectives 60

Market Assessments..... 60

Ridership Demand Estimation 63

Chapter
Contents

Market Assessments

Understanding the market demand for a given route is very important when considering potential service changes or even a complete restructuring of its alignment. For new routes, however, identifying the market to be served is even more critical to ensuring success.

A transit agency, through its established goals and objectives, may give priority to specific target markets (i.e., a commitment to serving elderly riders, the existence of a university fare pass program, or prioritizing employment-based trips). Therefore, market assessment techniques need to accommodate and should be conducted in support of the unique questions that must be answered by the transit agency's planners in pursuit of meeting agency goals and objectives, while still ensuring the overall quality of core services. For instance, estimating the total demand among elderly populations, university-area populations (i.e., students), and between key employment nodes are unique markets that may need to be assessed as part of meeting established goals and objectives.

Therefore, an assessment of multiple transit markets should be conducted as part of the TDP transit demand assessment, possibly through the utilization of techniques that can assess demand based on more than one variable. However, it is important to remember that individual market assessments for transit demand are just one part of the overall demand assessment process because routes can certainly serve more than one purpose. The pitfall in designing a service that serves multiple markets is that, by

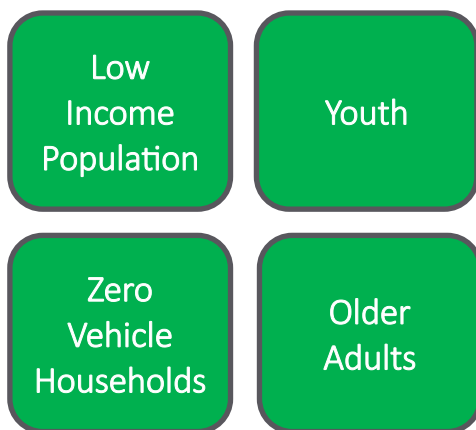
serving many purposes, the service may not provide a convenient trip for any one market segment.

Some of the key market segments and variables are discussed next in order to provide a framework for agency efforts. However, there may be other markets or individual transit markets that are unique to each agency and, if so, those markets should also be included in the demand assessment. This handbook does not address all such individual markets or specify how each market should be analyzed for demand. The extent of the market analysis and the corresponding tools used is a function of the resources available to the transit agency and its governing body. This section provides guidance on the markets and data for efforts to help agencies determine the appropriate scale of the assessment based on the resources available to them.

Three categories of key transit markets, including the traditional, discretionary, and travel markets, are discussed in the next sections as part of estimating the demand for transit.

Traditional Markets

The traditional transit market refers to population segments that historically have a higher propensity to use or depend on transit for their transportation needs.



For some individuals, their ability to drive is greatly diminished with age and they must rely on others for their transportation needs. Likewise, younger persons not yet of

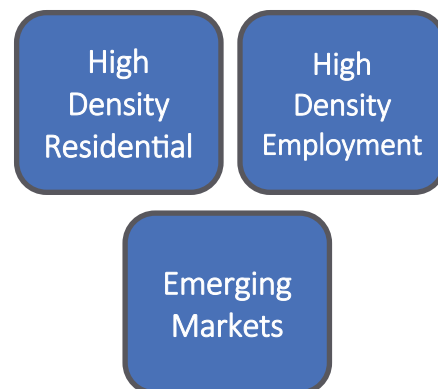
driving age but who need to travel to school, employment, or for leisure may rely more on public transportation until they reach driving age.

For lower-income households, transportation costs are particularly burdensome, as a greater proportion of income is used for transportation-related expenses than it is for higher-income households. Households with restricted income, particularly those without a private vehicle, are more likely to rely on public transportation for travel.

Therefore, traditional transit users include older adults, youth, and households that are low-income and/or have zero vehicles. The most recent demographic data from the Census or ACS may be used to assess these and any other applicable traditional markets. Local or regional agencies may not collect these types of demographic data. The use of mathematical/statistical processes also is encouraged to develop indices/indicators to help identify and prioritize areas with higher demand.

Discretionary Markets

The discretionary market refers to potential riders living in higher-density areas of the service area that may choose to use transit as a commuting or transportation alternative.



Typically, these areas include high-density residential and/or high-density employment areas, but may also include some of the emerging markets such as areas that include pockets of higher proportions of millennial populations or hubs, or bicycle/pedestrian networks.

Identifying discretionary rider markets is essential if an agency aspires to expand its ridership base and to reach beyond the traditional rider markets. However, providing the right type of service to attract discretionary riders

(a.k.a. “choice riders”) may be comparably more difficult than simply identifying where these individuals are located.

The density data for a discretionary markets analysis usually come from local and regional sources, collected as

Using Data Driven Tools to Analyze Transit Markets

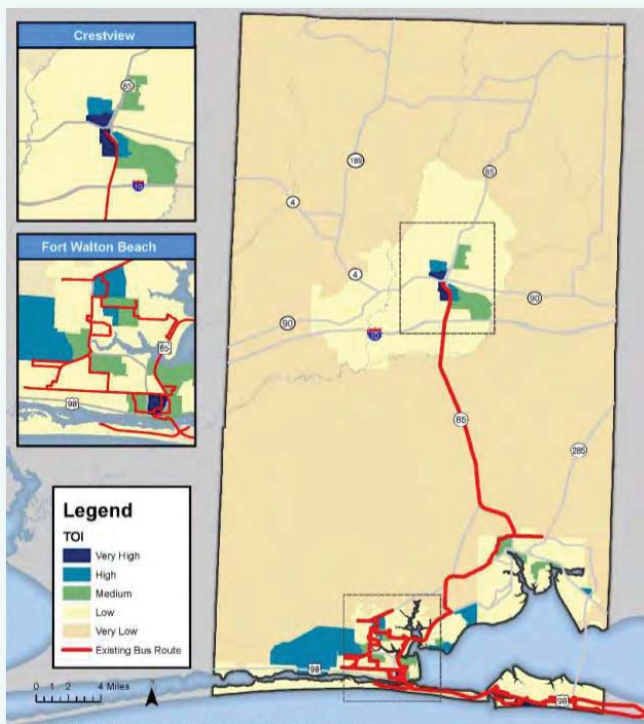
EC Rider TDP, Okaloosa County, FL

Traditional Markets—Emerald Coast Rider (EC Rider) transit in Okaloosa County used demographic data from the ACS to develop a Transit Orientation Index (TOI) in its recent TDP to assess traditional markets, including low-income and zero-vehicle households, and older adults and youth segments of the population. The GIS-based and statistical analysis resulted in ranking each Census Block Group based on its orientation towards transit. The EC Rider TOI map below and on the left shows the color-coding associated with the level of transit orientation and, thus, potential demand based on traditional markets.

Discretionary Markets—The TDP also used current and future population and employment density data and established industry thresholds to develop a Density Threshold Assessment (DTA) to identify transit demand areas that correspond to meriting either medium, high, or very high transit investments. Dwelling unit and employment data developed as part of the local MPO’s most recent LRTP were inputs into the DTA. The GIS-based DTA analysis below and on the right helped EC Rider to identify areas with the potential to support transit service ranging from regular bus services to premium transit modes such as BRT (i.e., very high investment).



Case Study



part of or for use in other transportation projects. In addition, many local and regional agencies collaborate on local projects related to bicycle/pedestrian networks and have information regarding facility usage and hub locations. Finally, areas for which corridor studies or Complete Streets concepts are being or have been explored may also have data on discretionary rider markets.

The millennial (“Gen Y”) generation is another relatively new transit market of discretionary riders, albeit a greatly influential one, since millennials are now the largest generation, representing approximately one-third of the total U.S. population, according to the U.S. Executive Office Council of Economic Advisors. Shaped by technology and the Internet, the preferences of millennials are very different than preceding generations, particularly related to how and where they live, and how they get around. In its *America in 2013* survey, the Urban Land Institute reported that millennials are twice as likely to use public transportation over other generations and largely prefer to live in larger urban areas with transportation options to driving, differing considerably from their more auto-centric and suburban living Gen X predecessors.

Identifying where millennials may live and work may involve a mix of existing assessments, as well as innovative public outreach, e.g., using social media as a medium, in order to determine transit preferences.

Travel Markets

Origin and destination grids can be developed using transit survey data and outputs from regional highway travel demand models. A summary of origin-destination pairs may reveal frequently-occurring or “major” pairs. An assessment of these pairs can reveal potential demand for transit.

Bus Rider
Travel
Markets

Regional
Travel
Markets

Bus Rider Travel Markets

Origin-destination patterns from transit surveys reveal the beginning and ending points of trips made by transit users. The process used usually consists of administering on-board or intercept surveys where starting points and final destination points of transit riders are recorded as part of the survey questions. The survey results (e.g., origin-destination pairs) can then be geocoded using GIS and mapped on a grid of the service area, as shown in Figure 3-11. Key patterns of trip origins and trip destinations for current riders can be determined and gaps in the transit network that do not meet these pairs can be highlighted.

Regional Travel Markets

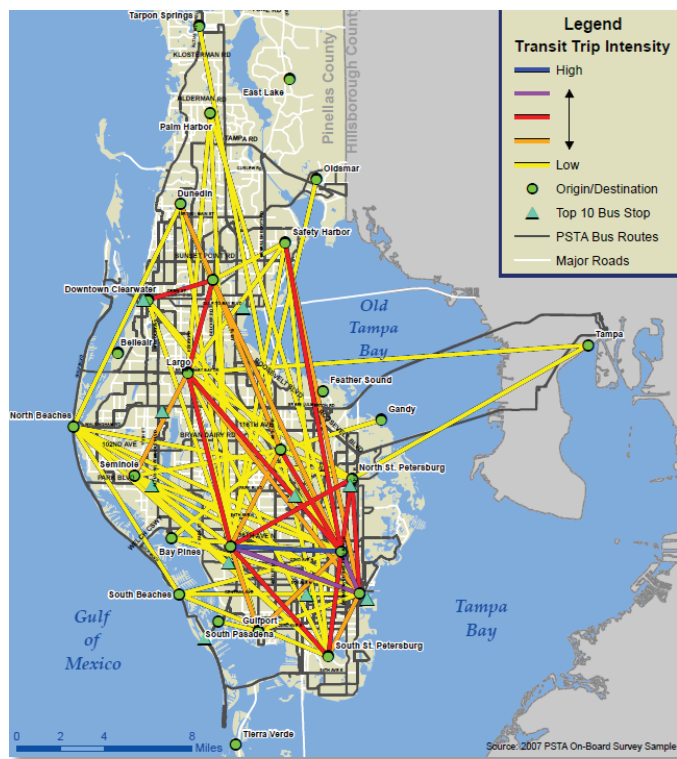
A GIS-based review of origin-destination pairs from a regional travel model for automobile person trips can reveal frequently-occurring or “major” trip pairs for non-transit riders. As regional models typically include data for current trip and future trip projections, alongside a map of the transit network, an assessment of the major pairs can identify the hot spots, both now and in the future, as well as corridor markets currently not served by the existing network, e.g., Figure 3-12.

Ridership Demand Estimation

The purpose of this section is to describe ridership estimation methodologies for transit agencies developing TDPs, including the process of applying ridership forecasting tools or other methods in order to understand potential transit demand in the community. This application includes forecasting the expected ridership for the status quo network and then comparing this baseline to potential demand for specific scenarios of the implementation plan identified in the TDP.

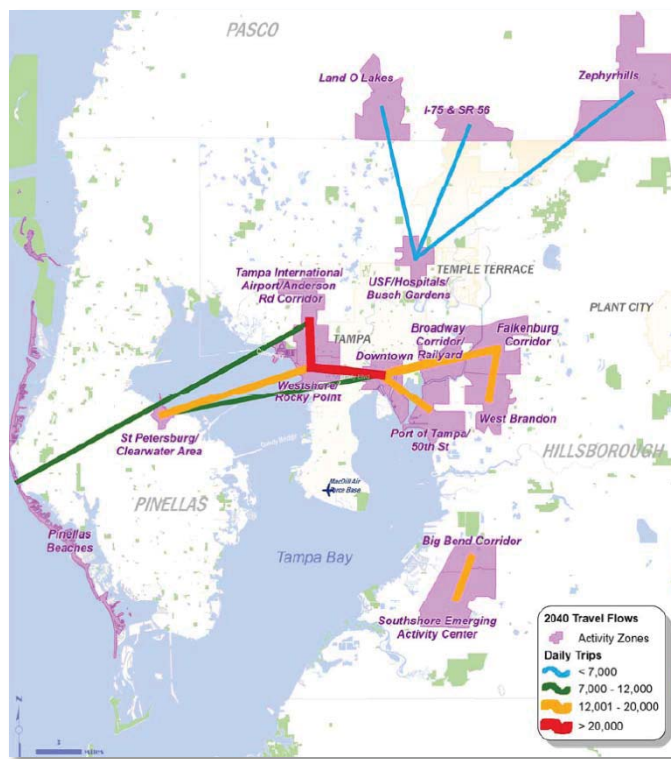
A series of ridership estimates can provide a measure of transit use that might be expected for an area if served by different service scenarios. It is important to recognize, though, that the final ridership forecast for a recommended plan may be less than estimated in some

Figure 3-11: Transit Riders Travel Flows



Source: Pinellas County TDP, 2008

Figure 3-12: Automobile Trip Flows



Source: Hillsborough County TDP, 2017

Both transit rider and personal automobile travel flow lines can help transit agencies identify where transit riders and commuters originate and to where they are destined, as shown above. The width and color of the lines indicate the intensity of the travel flows.

alternative planning scenarios considered during the plan development phase since it may not be feasible or publicly palatable to fund the levels of service that produced the highest demand scenarios tested. The ridership forecasts developed for the TDP serve as a basis for understanding the anticipated traveler response to implementation of that service plan.

Finally, the ridership forecasts are not only useful in identifying areas where demand exists, but also for supporting estimates of vehicle and facility needs, including infrastructure such as bus shelters, signage, park-and-ride facilities, etc.—items that will drive the capital cost component of projects in the TDP. Hence, a forecasting capability is critical to the TDP development process.

Selecting A Forecasting Method

FDOT's guidance for the TDP's ridership forecasting processes include:

"An estimation of the community's demand for transit service using the planning tools provided by the Department, or a Department approved transit demand estimation technique with supporting demographic, land use, transportation, and transit data. The result of the transit demand estimation process shall be a ten-year annual projection of transit ridership."

The guidance provided in this chapter is catered to meet FDOT's guidance and transit agencies in Florida should follow such in the preparation of their TDP major update ridership forecasts (no ridership forecasts are required or encouraged for APRs).



Requesting Approval for an Alternative Ridership Estimation Method

A transit agency that wants to pursue approval for an alternative method for demand forecasting should:

- Author a letter of request directed to the public transit administrator at the FDOT District Office
- Indicate serious consideration of the approved as well as alternative methods
- Include a discussion of the proposed alternative method and the reasons why it is being proposed
- Talk to District personnel in advance of the request
- Allow District personnel 30 days to respond in writing
- Provide a copy of the District's letter as an appendix in the submitted TDP

validation with local data in the pursuit of developing bus ridership projections, and a means of forecasting BRT ridership. TBEST ridership estimation models simulate travel demand at the individual stop-level while accounting for network connectivity, spatial and temporal accessibility, time-of-day variations, and route competition and complementarity.

The software has been designed to provide near- and mid-term forecasts of transit ridership consistent with the needs of transit operational planning and TDP development. While it was primarily developed to support the ridership estimation requirement for Florida transit agencies for their TDPs, TBEST also has evolved to support a variety of other transit planning tasks, including Title VI analyses and Comprehensive Operational Analyses (COA).

A transit agency should select its forecasting method or combination of methods based on the unique context of its operating environment. An agency should carefully review this section to determine what method might be most relevant in its context. Subsequently, an agency can decide to use the tools developed and supported by FDOT or to select a methodology other than that provided by FDOT. If choosing the latter option, the agency must solicit pre-approval from its FDOT District Office.

The basis for deciding the method to use should be made by the local transportation planning professionals and based on several factors and considerations, including:

- **Community Needs** – Service area including size, population, anticipated growth in the community, and interface with other area transit providers.
- **Agency Capabilities** – The agency in-house staff and software capabilities or scale of services available through contract.
- **Transit Growth** – The magnitude of the potential service change anticipated or possible in the 10-year timeframe being studied.
- **Availability of Tools** – The presence of existing calibrated and validated forecasting tools for the service area.
- **Availability of Data** – The availability of data to support various service demand estimating methods under consideration.

Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool (TBEST), as described next, is recommended and supported by FDOT. The tool is available for free and provides built-in base input data layers and includes coded route networks for most transit agencies.

TBEST—Recommended Estimation Tool

TBEST is the FDOT-approved and recommended ridership forecasting tool for TDPs. It allows for model calibration,

TBEST software can be installed on a desktop computer without costs or licensing fees; however, TBEST does require that a licensed version of ArcGIS be installed on the same computer.

It should be noted that this handbook intends only to provide an introduction and brief overview of TBEST and not a detailed explanation of its full functionality. Some of the key capabilities/features of TBEST include:

- Ability to develop and run status quo, needs plan, funded plan, and other network scenarios;
- Allows user-defined network characteristics, fare inputs, local agency socio-economic data and growth factors, and other agency specific inputs; and

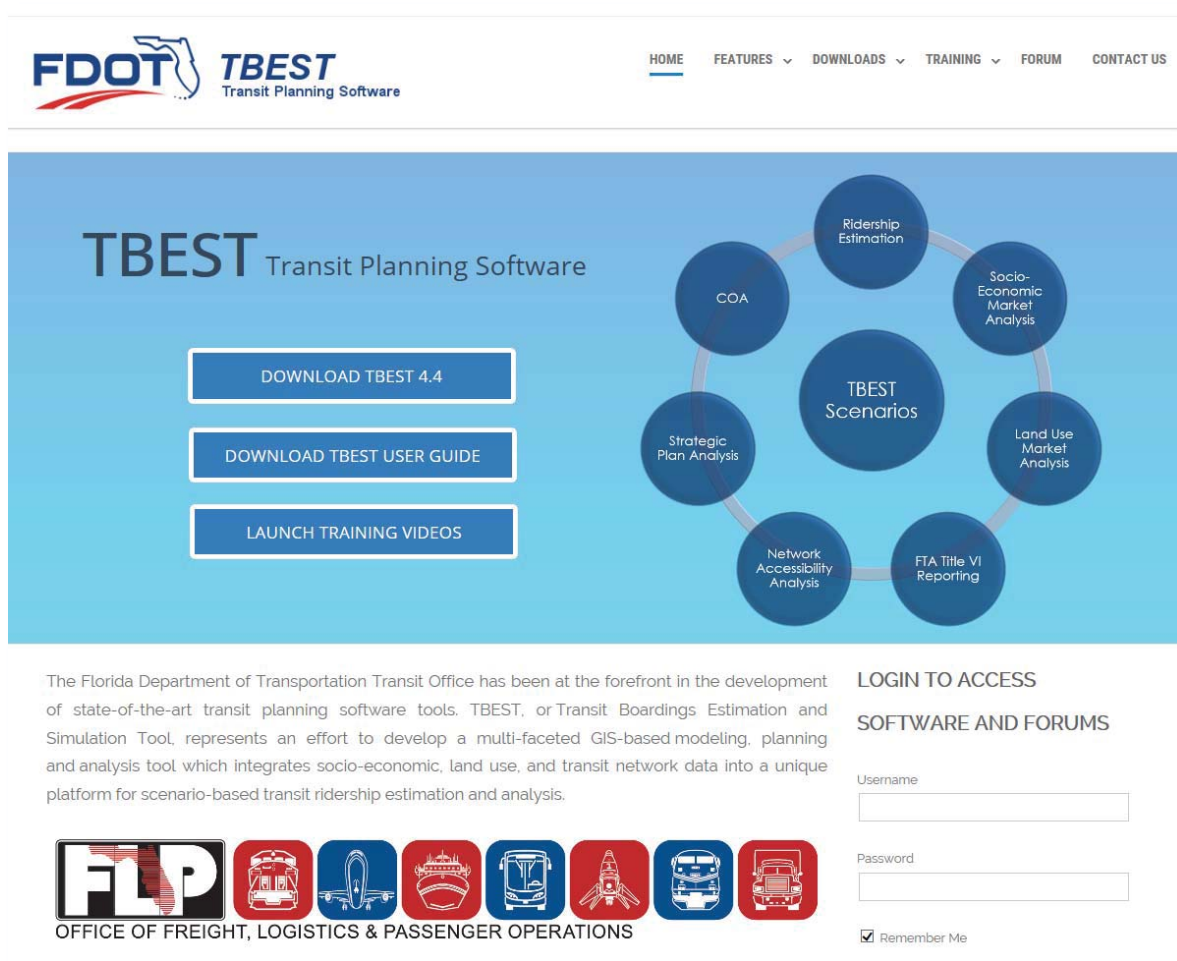
TBEST Resources for Transit Agencies

The TBEST website (www.tbest.org), as shown in Figure 3-13, provides access to the TBEST software download, TBEST User Guide, TBEST training videos and other TBEST-related information.

In addition, FDOT provides TBEST seminar training opportunities and on-call technical support. For more information, use the Contact Us page (www.tbest.org/contact-us) on the TBEST website to reference contact information for FDOT-approved TBEST support personnel.



Figure 3-13: TBEST Website



- Provides various model output reports, including route-level ridership, performance, and network socio-economic overviews.

For agencies that have developed General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) files for use in their trip planning software/apps, TBEST offers tools to import GTFS files directly into the TBEST software so that the network analyzed is accurate and reflects current network characteristics. For agencies without GTFS files, FDOT also provides coded base networks for downloading into TBEST.

TBEST models are derived from the publicly available U.S. Census data, licensed data from InfoUSA, and the Florida Department of Revenue's parcel centroid spatial and tabular databases that are built into TBEST. Therefore, a large portion of the data required for ridership estimates is already provided by FDOT as part of the TBEST software. However, TBEST provides the ability to import and utilize pre-formatted socio-economic data (such as Z-Data files developed by MPOs for their LRTPs) for model development if specialized scenarios need to be estimated.

Other Estimation Methods

Elasticity of Demand

Transit demand projections also can be based on industry-specific service and fare elasticities of demand. Service and fare elasticities can project the effects on ridership of changes in fares and service. Generally accepted values are -0.29 for the elasticity of ridership with respect to fare and +0.61 for the elasticity of ridership with respect to service ("Transit Price Elasticities and Cross-Elasticities," *Journal of Public Transportation*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2004, pp. 37–58.). This means that, for example, a 100 percent increase in transit fare will result in a 29 percent decrease in ridership, while a 100 percent increase in levels of service (i.e., a doubling of service) will produce a 61 percent increase in ridership.

When calculating fare and service elasticity projections, it is important to note that all service improvements are not equal. Expansion into areas where there is significant

demand may result in greater ridership increases than these average figures. Therefore, caution should be exercised when using elasticity measures to assess ridership changes.

Regional Travel Demand Models

When using software models, TBEST may be the logical choice for estimating bus ridership with its support from FDOT, but agencies are not precluded from using other methods, as mentioned previously. For example, transit agencies in larger urban areas where conventional "4-step" travel demand models have been developed and validated for local application may use that tool with FDOT approval. While large-scale regional models are seldom recommended for application in making route-level service priority decisions, these can provide insight and guidance at a level sufficient for use in TDP development.

Additionally, as TBEST still does not support rail ridership projections, agencies with a rail mode may benefit from using the regional model for their system ridership projections or using the regional model for rail and TBEST for bus modes, with FDOT approval.

STOPS Model—FTA's Simplified Trips-on-Project Software

STOPS is a limited implementation of the conventional "4-step" travel model that is available from FTA and used mainly for New Starts and Small Starts fixed-guideway project justifications. STOPS uses Census data and replaces the traditional coded transit network with standard transit-services data in GTFS format. If an agency operates fixed-guideway modes, using STOPS may be an option if it has recently developed STOPS ridership estimates or has resources to use STOPS for its fixed-guideway ridership estimates. More information on FTA's STOPS model is available on FTA's website or at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/capital-investments/stops>.

Comparable Route Method

Some agencies might consider using the comparable route method in situations where their transit service is very modest and changes are similarly expected to be relatively minor. This might be the case in areas where a few routes exist today and expectations include adding a few more routes that may operate in the same environment over the time period of the TDP analysis. This method consists of estimating the demand for new routes using route productivity data (i.e., riders per revenue hour) based on data from routes that are expected to have similar levels of performance. However, as change is inevitable even in the most modest system or environment, extreme caution should be used when relying on such “sketch-level” estimations.

Land Use & Growth Trends

Awareness of current and future land use and development patterns will shed light on transit demand, especially where congestion is an issue and/or residential and/or employment densities are rising. Past land use decisions dictated by automobile dependence and future land use decisions based on growth management will affect transit systems and the demand for their services. Similarly, community and street planning/design and development standards based on Complete Streets can make an area’s demand for transit increase significantly. If the transit agency expects that land use and growth trends will significantly impact the demand for transit, then it is incumbent upon that agency to develop the methodology and model for estimating such demand.

Ridership on Other Modes

As transit agencies are looking for new ways to meet market needs and save costs by considering new service concepts, such as app-based ride-hail services and vanpools, methods may be necessary to project ridership for those modes, too. For such modes where TBEST may not be useful, agencies may use historical data, peer city/

agency experiences, and/or industry research to develop ridership projections.

Unless such modes play a significant role and/or represent a major part of the service provided, FDOT approval of these ridership estimation methods used may not be necessary. However, agencies may need to contact their FDOT District Office transit staff if they are in doubt or need additional guidance.

Holistic Approach

As most of the tools included herein may do well in one area while lacking focus on another, the best estimate of transit demand and mobility needs for the community will be achieved by using a combination of appropriate techniques together with the findings from other key components, most importantly, public outreach and the situation appraisal.

3.7 Alternatives Development & Evaluation

This component of the TDP brings together the findings from the efforts of all previous components. Study area data and existing transit services are compared with demand and mobility needs to see whether the transit agency's goals are being met and, if not, determine what improvements must be recommended to fulfill the community's vision for transit. Findings from the baseline data assessments, outreach efforts, peer/trend analyses, situation appraisal, and the data-driven transit demand and mobility needs analyses all collectively contribute to the development and evaluation of alternatives. A careful, objective consideration of these findings can result in a transit plan that is truly responsive to the community and its mobility needs.

Objectives

The primary objective of this component is to leverage the data compiled thus far to develop potential alternatives to fulfill the unmet transit demand and mobility needs. However, because no single component included to this point in Chapter 3 of this handbook can provide a complete and accurate indication of the needs within the study area, a coordinated process for synthesizing each section's respective results side-by-side is required. Each section employs different analysis and identification techniques that all contribute important pieces of the full needs picture.

For instance, a TBEST model developed to predict future ridership might not appropriately reflect local conditions a year from now, such as changes in land use, which can impact the likelihood of transit services being used. Similarly, on-board surveys, interviews with key local officials, and discussion groups all provide subjective insights into the attitudes of specific sub-groups within the full community, but also do not paint the full picture. Until the findings/guidance of the individual components are

3.7 Alternatives Development

& Evaluation.....	69
Objectives	69
10-Year Transit Needs	
Development	69
Public Outreach/Feedback	70
Developing Alternatives	70
Evaluating Alternatives.....	71
Ranking TDP Priorities	73

Chapter
Contents

combined, the development of alternatives will be incomplete and perhaps even unintentionally biased. This is why the quality of a TDP is strongly correlated with the use of multiple techniques in the alternatives development and evaluation process.

Table 3-10: TDP Rule Requirement vs. Best Practice

Alternatives Development & Evaluation	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
10-Year TDP Alternatives	✓	
Public Outreach/Feedback	✓	
Alternatives Evaluation		✓

10-Year Transit Needs Development

Alternatives should be developed and scheduled for implementation during the next 10-year period as part of addressing unmet community mobility needs and to fulfill the vision and goals set forth for the agency.

Alternatives should be developed with consideration for service, capital/infrastructure, and technology needs, as well as policy improvements. Compliance with all local, state, and federal policies and programs also must be considered in the development of alternatives.

Strategic Plan

The TDP is intended to be more strategic in nature than an operations plan or even a COA, which better serves to provide specific recommendations concerning transit routing, scheduling, and operating parameters. The TDP should strive to provide system-wide, market-oriented recommendations based on the transit agency's vision of its role in the community (e.g., provide service to major trip generators; design new service to areas with growing residential development; concentrate service in neighborhoods with a high proportion of transit-dependent population).

As part of a strategic plan, the alternatives developed should represent a broad direction for the transit system. This direction should be in concurrence with the agency's vision as it addresses the transit demand and mobility needs of the community.

For example, alternatives might address issues such as the following:

- Improving existing transit services versus expanding service to attract new riders;
- Offering more direct, line-haul service (i.e., along key corridors) versus offering local, neighborhood coverage;
- Operating a system oriented toward the downtown or CBD versus one oriented toward outlying activity centers; or
- Applying innovative strategies and approaches used elsewhere.

Financially Unconstrained Needs

It is important that alternatives be developed in an unconstrained fashion. In this way, all alternatives to address transit demand and mobility needs will be identified. The alternatives should not, therefore, be developed around limitations of the current budget. Budgetary constraints will be introduced later in the process with the identification of funding sources.

Meeting Community Needs

The TDP must be responsive to the transit needs of the community.

Transit demand, mobility needs, and the community's aspirations for transit collectively form the base upon which alternatives/improvements will be developed for the TDP and added to the implementation plan.



The alternatives developed in this component will provide the basis for the 10-year transit plan addressed in the next component. Therefore, in presenting alternatives, it is important that all implications, positive or negative, associated with the alternatives be addressed.

Public Outreach/Feedback

Decision-makers and the public should be provided with the opportunity to comment on the alternatives developed during this phase of the TDP, in accordance with the language regarding public involvement contained in the TDP Rule. Any advisory board set up to oversee the TDP process should also have the same opportunity. Public meetings or workshops can provide a forum for presenting the identified alternatives and/or soliciting ideas for the evaluation process.

Developing Alternatives

Unmet needs are the primary driving force in the TDP and transit planners can contribute by developing strategies to help address these unmet needs. While typical transit service planning is based on the somewhat limiting credo of "design the best ways to meet needs while keeping within the budget," the TDP should encourage transit planners to disregard (within reason) the "keeping within the budget" aspect of the credo in order to develop a list of truly applicable alternatives that, as noted previously, are financially unconstrained. The goal is to produce viable

alternatives that, once assessed and prioritized, will become a list of unfunded needs (e.g., service, capital, technology, even policy), which may not be affordable now, but may become implementable within the next 10 years if additional resources become available.

Frequency vs. Equity Tradeoff

When developing lists of potential improvements, a strategic decision faced by service planners sometimes is the choice between coverage and frequency. A coverage-oriented strategy would extend service (e.g., low-frequency service) to all parts of the service area. The resulting “lines on a map” are typically politically expedient and pleasing to many stakeholders, regardless of service frequency or ridership levels.

A frequency-oriented strategy would provide additional service on major (or all) corridors with high demand before adding routes in un-served areas. Enhanced frequency is one of the most effective strategies to encourage additional ridership. Given that transit operates within a political context and resources for system improvements are often scarce, most strategies involve a mix of improving both coverage and frequency. The relative emphasis of one aspect over another should be considered carefully as it can affect how the system defines itself for the future.

Evaluating Alternatives

Once an agency develops a set of service alternatives, it is important to weigh the benefits of each service improvement against the full list of candidates to evaluate and prioritize those improvements. By conducting an alternatives evaluation, the agency can better prioritize projects and allocate existing available funding using an objective improvement ranking process.

Evaluation Process

A three-step methodology is suggested to evaluate and prioritize transit alternatives, which consists of the following steps:

“Unconstrained” Needs

Alternatives should be developed in an unconstrained fashion, without consideration for the current budget. This means that all possible alternatives should be considered and discussed in this section.



- Define evaluation criteria and assign weights;
- Develop performance standards/thresholds; and
- Conduct evaluation and produce a matrix of priorities.

Figure 3-14 shows an example of a TDP alternatives development and evaluation process that includes these steps for developing a TDP needs plan.

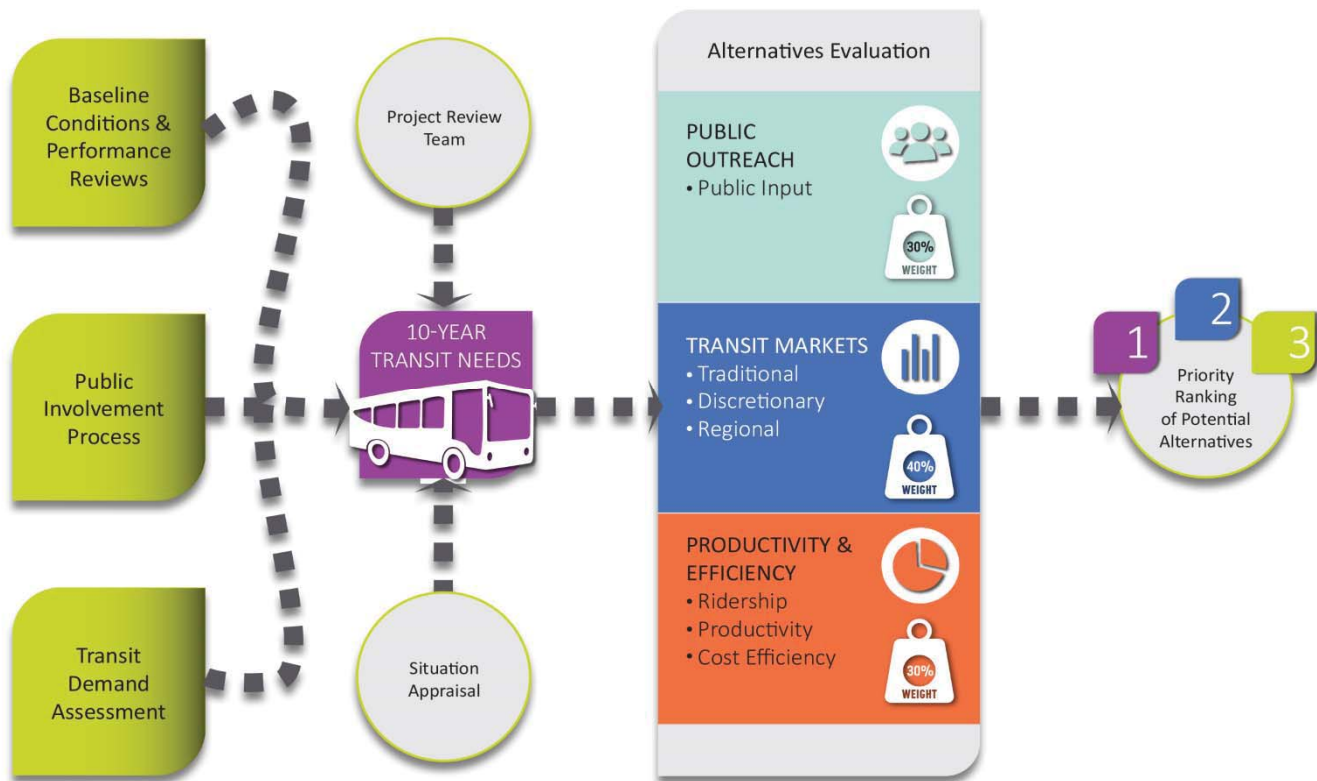
While FDOT encourages an alternatives evaluation process in TDPs, the scale and complexity of this process should be determined by the transit agency based on the resources available and the importance of the various factors impacting transit.

Evaluation Criteria

When selecting appropriate criteria to use, some criteria may be considered more important by the community/ agency than others. In the event that the criteria differ in importance, the evaluation should also include an opportunity to assign weights to reflect these levels of importance. However, an agency also may have its evaluation criteria weighted equally if such an emphasis is not warranted.

A number of criteria that are suggested for transit agencies to consider for evaluating their TDP alternatives are presented next in this section. In addition, Table 3-11 provides a sample evaluation matrix for evaluating and prioritizing a set of TDP alternatives.

Figure 3-14: TDP Alternatives Development and Evaluation Process Example



Public Outreach – Input/findings from public outreach, one of the most important components of the TDP, can help agencies identify community support for a particular route, type of service, or other improvement. The data can be simply analyzed as qualitative or more technically with the use of spreadsheets to quantitatively assess outreach findings.

Transit Markets – Access/connectivity to any transit market analyzed for the TDP, not limited to traditional, discretionary, or travel, also can be used as a criterion. Others markets may include regional markets or a university community, for example. Market analyses typically are best completed using GIS-based tools.

Productivity & Efficiency – Productivity is generally measured in terms of ridership. Measurements of service efficiency are used by transit agencies to gauge how well they use resources. Since each measure is critical to the

success of the agency, services performing well in terms of their productivity and efficiency should receive a higher priority. Forecasts of ridership, revenue hours, and operating cost for each individual alternative are used for this criterion.

Revenue Potential – A criterion may also be selected that closely reflects the objective to provide a financially feasible and efficient transit system. Financial feasibility is typically linked to revenue potential, especially the local government’s potential to support a particular transit alternative.

Service Characteristics – A set of service-related criteria can measure the ability of transit alternatives to enhance the convenience and accessibility of existing services. Service directness, activity center connectivity, transfer opportunities, and wait time can be used to measure the accessibility and convenience of transit services.








Equity – The equity criterion can address the potential for alternatives to provide service to transit dependent individuals and/or the affordability of the fare structure. Measurements of transit dependent populations served or average fare prices can be used for this criterion, for example.

and/or refine these criteria given the unique conditions that they face. Potential local community issues or concerns also may drive the potential need to incorporate other factors into the evaluation process.

Ranking TDP Priorities

The correct set of criteria can provide an agency a solid basis for comparing and prioritizing transit alternatives. As part of this handbook, several common sense and relatively easy to measure criteria have been presented, as previously summarized. However, agencies should add to

Table 3-11: Sample TDP Alternative Evaluation Process

Category	Criteria	Measure of Effectiveness	Criteria Weight	Effort High	Effort Med	Effort Low
Community Support	Public Input	Qualitative or technical measure of the level of interest in specific alternative	35%			
Transit Markets	Traditional Market	Technical measure of market capture (preferably GIS-based)	40%			
	Discretionary Market					
	Regional Market Connections					
	Travel Market					
Productivity & Efficiency	Productivity	Ridership potential (e.g., trips per hour)	25%			
	Cost Efficiency	Cost (e.g., cost per trip)				



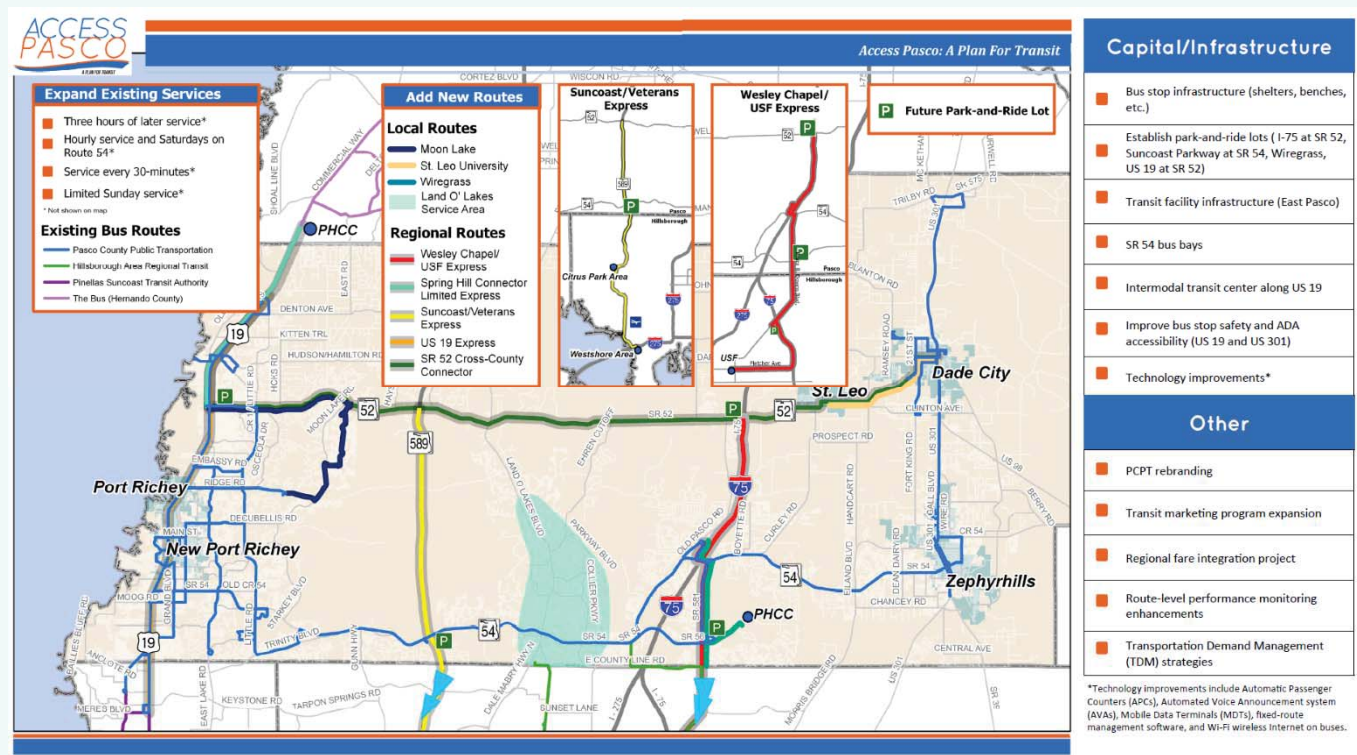
Case Study

Presenting the Complete Set of Needs

Access Pasco TDP, Pasco County, FL

Displaying and summarizing the eventual set of priority alternatives is often a challenge, as well. Visuals and maps are key mediums that should be used to convey the identified alternatives. Oftentimes, these mediums can result in an effective tool that can be used during the second phase of TDP public involvement to solicit productive feedback directly on the alternatives.

As part of its 2013 TDP, PCPT developed a map that included all of the identified alternatives, including service, capital/infrastructure, and policy improvements, for the 10-year plan. By combining all of the alternatives into a single visual, the public was easily able to review all of the potential projects and help PCPT prioritize them.



3.8 10-Year Transit Plan

As the design for the transit system's future, the 10-Year Transit Plan component clarifies how the previously identified and prioritized alternatives can fit into implementation and funding plans that will meet the demand and mobility needs of the community. The development of a clear service implementation plan; the identification of operating, capital, planning/policy costs and revenues; and the final recommendation of policy alternatives for the previously evaluated alternatives are all crucial steps toward achieving the TDP's goals and objectives. The product of this component is a succinct, phased implementation plan and financial plan, summarized as a 10-year program that is inclusive of both the funded and unfunded priorities for the community.

Objectives

The ultimate objective of this component is to transfer the previously recommended and prioritized alternatives into a 10-year phased implementation and financial plan that will serve as the action plan to improve the existing transit system. This plan, by design, should be sensitive to the unique operating environment of the transit agency and its transit needs. Additionally, the 10-Year Transit Plan should embody the transit agency's vision as established in an earlier component of the TDP development process.

Table 3-12: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

10-Year Plan	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
TDP Alternatives	✓	
Financial Plan	✓	
Financial Summary Presentation		✓
Implementation Plan	✓	
List of Unfunded Needs	✓	
Marketing Program		✓
Performance Monitoring	✓	

3.8 10-Year Transit Plan	75
Objectives	75
Key Elements	75
Recommended Alternatives...	75
TDP Financial Plan	76
Funding for the 10-Year Plan	80
TDP Implementation Plan	82
Monitoring Program.....	83
Plan Performance Comparisons.....	83
Marketing Program	83
TDP Adoption—Ensuring Support at the End	84

Chapter
Contents

Key Elements

Once the prioritized list of service alternatives, related capital needs, and planning and policy recommendations has been finalized, the formulation of the 10-Year Transit Plan can begin. The elements of this component should include the following, and are summarized in Figure 3-15:

- A list of service, capital, planning, and policy recommendations;
- A 10-year implementation plan for the funded recommendations;
- A 10-year financial plan for the implementation plan based on reasonable assumptions of costs and revenues; and
- A list of unfunded needs for which funding sources have not been identified.

Recommended Alternatives

The list of recommended alternatives should include specific recommendations/strategies that aim to meet the community's transit needs. The alternatives are typically categorized into the following groups: service, capital/infrastructure, planning, and policy improvements/strategies.

Figure 3-15: Elements of the 10-Year Plan



Assuming that the previous alternatives evaluation process was able to prioritize the final selections for the TDP's recommendations, the list should consist of a range of different projects that reinforce the TDP's commitment to furthering the agency's vision, goals, and objectives. Maps of the recommended service alternatives, and details of the types and levels of service proposed, should be included to demonstrate the different parts of the transit agency's service area that stand to benefit from the service recommendations. These maps can be extensions of or additions to existing transit service maps, and clearly highlight the proposed services and facilities, where applicable, so that the recommendations can be easily distinguished from the existing system. Alongside any maps or other visuals, a listing of capital/infrastructure

(including technology), planning, and policy improvements/strategy recommendations also should be included so that the full 10-Year Transit Plan can be readily identified.

Funded and Unfunded Needs

Until this point in the TDP process, costs and available resources have not been considered during the transit needs identification and prioritization processes. It is important to note that, while cost and revenues are explicitly addressed next in the financial plan, these fiscal considerations still should not affect the timing of the recommended alternatives; however, it is the subsequent structuring of the implementation plan that will begin to determine how, and if, each recommendation will be phased over the 10-year horizon depending on estimated costs and revenues associated with each recommendation.

Therefore, transit agencies should include all of the recommended alternatives upfront, regardless of the funding outlook. At the end of the 10-Year Transit Plan component, a determination of which recommendations that are unable to be funded, based on current revenue projections, will be possible. In addition to a financial plan for the recommendations that can be funded, FDOT expects that this component of the TDP will result in a list of "unfunded needs," that is, a list of needed actions for which there are either no funding sources or insufficient funding. This list can be included within the 10-Year Transit Plan section or as an appendix, if an agency wishes to present the list separately from the funded plan.

TDP Financial Plan

The TDP financial plan affords agencies the opportunity to match needed transit system improvements with available financial resources. In the financial plan, operating, capital, and policy costs are projected and revenue sources are identified for the full 10-year horizon of the TDP. Consequently, it is through the development of the TDP financial plan that transit agencies can

determine which service improvements can be realistically achieved from a funding perspective and when those service improvements are able to be implemented. However, it is a planning fiscal estimate and should not be considered an operating budget or a capital improvement plan.

TDP Financial Plan Tool

To facilitate transit agencies developing and presenting their TDP financial plans in a more complete and consistent manner, FDOT has provided the TDP Financial Plan Tool. This easy-to-use, Microsoft Excel-based tool is available for agencies to download on the FDOT Public Transit Office website (<http://www.fdot.gov/transit/Pages/NewTransitPlanningandPolicy.shtm>). The tool is intended to provide a standard format with which Florida transit agencies can develop, analyze, and summarize their TDP financial plans. However, it is not required that agencies use this tool. Agencies may modify the tool to meet their planning needs or employ other means of developing the costs and revenues associated with the 10-Year Transit Plan. At a minimum, a detailed costs and revenues summary and capital acquisition plan are required, which are explained in more detail in the “Financial Summary Presentation” section.

The tool consists of seven elements and each is presented on a separate worksheet. However, not all of the worksheets require user input as several of the financial plan tool components automatically populate and calculate based on user-entered information and formulas embedded in the tool. Therefore, the tool aims to provide a user-friendly process for compiling the financial plan that will minimize errors, total effort, and time expended by transit agencies. The seven elements of the financial plan tool are briefly described in the following bullets and an illustration of how each component fits into the overall financial plan is shown in Figure 3-16.

- **Assumptions** – Prompts agencies to compile all of the operating and capital/planning cost assumptions to be utilized as part of subsequent elements in the tool. Because inputs and unit costs may vary between agencies, it is recommended that “cost per revenue service hour” is the base unit used for projecting operating costs.
- **Service Plan** – Profiles the operating characteristics of both existing transit services and the recommended alternative services (e.g., headways, revenue hours, revenue miles, and days of service) in order to compute their operating costs in current year dollars.

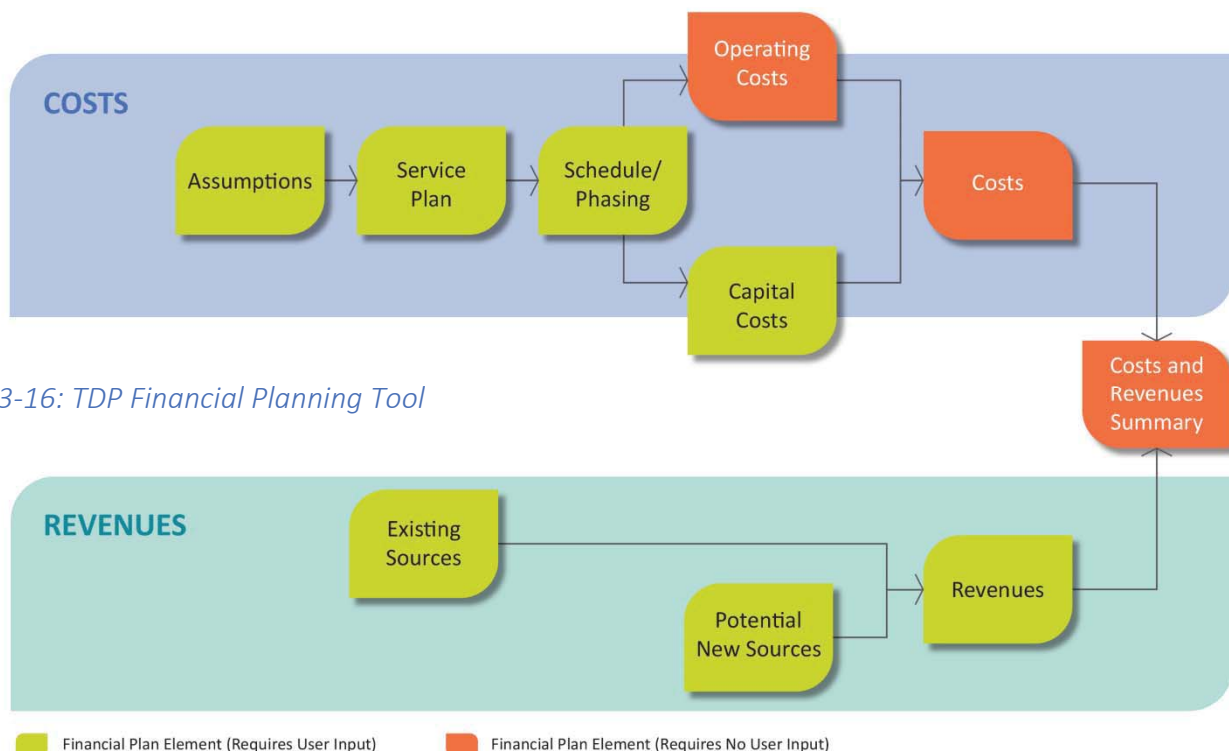


Figure 3-16: TDP Financial Planning Tool

- **Implementation Plan** – Records the potential schedule for implementing the recommended alternatives. The year of implementation is later used to develop estimates of annual operating costs for future years of the TDP.
- **Operating Cost Element** – Combines the inputs from the implementation and service plans to develop projections of annual operating costs, through the application of inflation factors, associated with operating/implementing existing/new service alternatives in future years of the TDP.
- **Capital/Planning Cost Element** – Includes capital elements and their associated costs related to new service alternatives and any other capital/infrastructure/planning projects outlined in the recommended alternatives list. Typical inclusions consist of vehicles required to operate the new services, capital/infrastructure/technology costs such as bus shelters or a new farebox system, the cost of conducting a COA or the next TDP, and any other projects.
- **Revenue Element** – Lists anticipated Federal, State, local, private, and directly-generated revenue sources for the transit agency. Total operating and capital/planning costs are carried forward to this element so that budget surpluses or shortfalls, if any, are calculated and displayed in this section.
- **Cost/Revenue Final Summary** – This element presents a full cost and revenue summary for the TDP. The summary is automatically populated based on the details provided in prior elements of the tool.

Depending on the final balances of the costs and revenues, and exact implementation years assigned to the recommended alternatives, which may create surpluses or shortfalls in a particular year, agencies will be able to determine which projects can fit into the “funded plan,” and those that currently overextend the revenue projections. This delineation will allow agencies to create a complete list of recommendations for which funding

Painting the Funding Picture

BCT Connected TDP, Broward County, FL

Buried in the details of estimating the cost of the recommended alternatives, it can be challenging to create a concise summary of the final financial plan. BCT employed the use of colors in bar graphs to clearly depict the total operating costs and revenues for the funded plan, a potential new funding source, and remaining shortfall for the full needs plan, clearly separating the short- and long-term funding needs. BCT developed a similar summary for its capital costs and revenues projections.

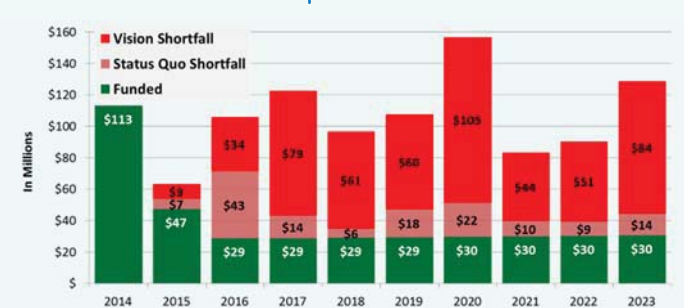


Case Study

Vision Plan—Operating Costs & Revenues



Vision Plan—Capital Costs & Revenues



sources have not yet been identified. As discussed previously, this is an important product of the 10-Year Transit Plan, and a result of the unconstrained nature of the needs assessment, that clearly demonstrates the needed projects that require additional funding.

Financial Summary Presentation

Effective presentation of the TDP financial plan summary is key to clearly painting the agency's funding picture for the next 10 years. It should include helpful graphics that clearly summarize the projected costs and revenues.

Prior to graphically summarizing the data, there are two such summaries that must be included in a TDP in a tabular format. The most critical is a table that summarizes the operating costs and revenues for all existing/proposed transit services, capital/planning costs for all projects, and revenues, all of which is projected over a 10-year horizon. An example of how this summary can be formatted is provided in Figure 3-17. The second is a capital acquisition program, or schedule, of new vehicles and any other capital-related expenditures in terms of the quantity/cost that will

be procured (e.g., Automatic Passenger Counters [APC] for 10 buses) by year, over a 10-year horizon.

Beyond these two critical components, transit agencies should consider what types of visual summaries will enhance the communication of the 10-Year Transit Plan. For instance, if there are multiple scenarios of the funded or needs plans, these should be explained. Additionally comparing the funded plan (sometimes referred to as the status quo plan), with the needs plan (sometimes referred to as the vision plan), can help communicate any differences between the two, as well as indicate how future scenarios of acquiring new revenue sources would affect the feasibility of different projects included in the TDP. In addition, charts of distributions of the funding sources used may also help to highlight, for example, the extent of local contribution for the plan.

Figure 3-17: Sample TDP 10-Year Cost/Revenue Summary

Cost/Revenue	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	10-Year Total
Operating											
Operating Cost											
Maintain Existing Fixed-Route	\$2,617,117	\$2,669,460	\$2,722,849	\$2,777,306	\$2,832,852	\$2,889,509	\$2,947,299	\$3,006,245	\$3,066,370	\$3,127,697	\$28,656,703
Maintain Existing Service - Paratransit	\$531,052	\$541,673	\$552,506	\$563,556	\$574,828	\$586,324	\$598,051	\$610,012	\$622,212	\$634,656	\$5,814,869
Improve Existing Services	\$154,185	\$157,269	\$160,414	\$163,623	\$166,895	\$170,233	\$173,638	\$177,110	\$180,652	\$184,266	\$1,688,284
Add Sunday Service on all Existing Routes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$240,777	\$245,593	\$250,505	\$736,875
New Local/Flex/Express Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$333,790	\$340,466	\$347,275	\$708,441	\$722,610	\$1,259,148	\$3,711,729
ADA Paratransit for New Fixed-Route Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$42,055	\$42,896	\$134,943	\$219,894
Total Operating Cost	\$3,302,354	\$3,368,401	\$3,435,769	\$3,504,485	\$3,908,364	\$3,986,532	\$4,066,262	\$4,784,640	\$4,880,333	\$5,591,215	\$40,828,356
Operating Revenues											
Federal 5307 for Operating	\$1,482,105	\$1,508,136	\$1,527,747	\$1,573,579	\$1,620,787	\$1,669,410	\$1,719,493	\$1,771,077	\$1,824,210	\$1,878,936	\$16,575,480
FDOT Block Grant Funds	\$607,437	\$627,491	\$658,866	\$691,809	\$726,399	\$755,455	\$785,673	\$817,100	\$849,784	\$883,775	\$7,403,790
FDOT Urban Corridor for Belleview-Villages Express	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$333,790	\$340,466	\$347,275	\$354,221	\$361,305	\$368,531	\$2,105,587
FDOT Service Development Grant for SR 200 Flex	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$177,110	\$180,652	\$184,266	\$542,028
FDOT Service Dev. for Ocala West Connector	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$261,043	\$261,043
Existing Local	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$618,000	\$636,540	\$655,636	\$675,305	\$695,564	\$6,281,046
New Local	\$179,882	\$183,481	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$1,163,363
Fare Revenue from Existing Services	\$338,130	\$344,893	\$351,790	\$358,826	\$366,003	\$373,323	\$380,789	\$388,405	\$396,173	\$404,097	\$3,702,429
Fare Revenue from New Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$47,843	\$48,800	\$49,776	\$136,055	\$138,776	\$216,384	\$637,633
Fuel Refund	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$300,000
Advertising Revenue	\$64,800	\$74,400	\$110,400	\$115,200	\$115,200	\$115,200	\$115,200	\$115,200	\$115,200	\$115,200	\$1,056,000
Total Operating Revenue	\$3,302,354	\$3,368,401	\$3,378,803	\$3,469,415	\$3,940,022	\$4,050,654	\$4,164,746	\$4,544,804	\$4,671,405	\$5,137,795	\$40,028,400
Annual Revenues Minus Costs	\$0	\$0	(\$56,966)	(\$35,070)	\$31,657	\$64,122	\$98,484	(\$239,836)	(\$208,928)	(\$453,419)	(\$799,955)
Rollover from Previous Year	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$56,966)	(\$92,036)	(\$60,379)	\$3,743	\$102,227	(\$137,609)	(\$346,537)	
Operating Surplus/Shortfall (Cumulative)	\$0	\$0	(\$56,966)	(\$92,036)	(\$60,379)	\$3,743	\$102,227	(\$137,609)	(\$346,537)	(\$799,956)	(\$799,955)
Capital											
Costs											
Vehicles	\$0	\$412,000	\$986,637	\$1,524,354	\$0	\$0	\$95,524	\$0	\$1,178,096	\$0	\$4,196,612
Replacement Fixed Route Buses - Maintain Existing	\$0	\$0	\$986,637	\$1,016,236	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$589,048	\$0	\$2,591,921
Replacement Buses - Maintain Existing Paratransit	\$0	\$412,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$412,000
Add New Transit Service (Local/Express + ADA Paratransit)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$508,118	\$0	\$0	\$95,524	\$0	\$589,048	\$0	\$1,192,690
Other Capital/Infrastructure	\$0	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$1,125,000
Bus Stop Infrastructure Program - Annual Allocation	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$450,000
ADA Improvements Annual Allocation	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$450,000
Facility Maintenance - Annual Allocation	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$225,000
Total Costs	\$0	\$537,000	\$1,111,637	\$1,649,354	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$220,524	\$125,000	\$1,303,096	\$125,000	\$5,321,612
Revenues											
Federal 5307 for Capital	\$0	\$517,895	\$491,864	\$472,253	\$426,421	\$379,213	\$330,590	\$280,507	\$228,923	\$175,790	\$3,303,456
Federal 5339	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,134,841	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$220,524	\$696,892	\$734,070	\$122,135	\$3,158,462
Total Capital Revenues	\$0	\$517,895	\$491,864	\$1,607,094	\$551,421	\$504,213	\$551,114	\$977,399	\$962,993	\$297,925	\$6,461,918
Annual Revenues Minus Costs	\$0	(\$19,105)	(\$619,773)	(\$42,260)	\$426,421	\$379,213	\$330,590	\$852,399	(\$340,104)	\$172,925	\$1,140,306
Rollover from Previous Year	\$0	\$0	(\$19,105)	(\$638,878)	(\$681,139)	(\$254,718)	\$124,495	\$455,085	\$1,307,484	\$967,381	
Capital Surplus/Shortfall (Cumulative)	\$0	(\$19,105)	(\$638,878)	(\$681,139)	(\$254,718)	\$124,495	\$455,085	\$1,307,484	\$967,381	\$1,140,306	\$1,140,306

Funding for the 10-Year Plan

Most TDP's consider two main categories of funding, one for operating expenses and one for capital/planning costs. Within each of these are several grant or funding programs, with some being distributed to transit agencies on a formula basis and others that are discretionary and require applications and project justifications to compete for grant awards. This section will cover both of these categories with some thoughts on how to increase them or enhance the ability to leverage these resources, and concludes with some guidance on leveraging all funds to maximize the resources and to fund additional services and equipment.

Formula Funding Programs

There are two main sources for formula-based funding allocations, Federal and State. On the federal side, the formula funding for urban systems comes from the FTA Section 5307 program and allows use of funding for both operating and capital/planning projects, with some limitations occurring the larger a system grows, based on its maximum number of buses operated in peak service. Agencies with less than 76 and between 76 and 100 peak buses have different limitations on how much can be spent on operating, and even greater limitation occurs for agencies with over 100 peak buses. Agencies should understand the allowances and establish budgets that best meet their respective needs within the allowances provided by FTA.

For rural transit operations, FTA has the Section 5311 formula program that is administered by FDOT as a pass-through program. This funding generally covers costs for any public transit services that are outside the urban area or for rural citizens to access services and locations within the urban area. Urban transit operators also may receive Section 5311 funds (for rural population within their jurisdiction) and are responsible for administering it.

On the state side, there is the Public Transit Block Grant program that provides funding for operations, capital, service development, transit corridor, and/or planning

expenses. This program is completely flexible and allows the recipients to determine annually how they want to use their funding.

These formula funding programs are distributed based on certain operating characteristics that can be improved by doing more efficient delivery of services and/or increasing ridership or other elements of a system. For example, a key part of the formula for Section 5307 funding is tied to ridership, and one-third of the formula for the State Block Grant program also is based on ridership. Thus, improving services and increasing ridership are beneficial under both the Federal and State formula programs.

Discretionary Funding Programs

On the federal side, there are a number of discretionary programs, mostly centered on three types of projects: capital needs, innovative applications, and air quality improvements. FTA has Section 5339 for transit vehicles and facilities. There are also the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) Grants for larger mobility projects and innovative technologies. FTA and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also fund air quality projects and projects involving alternative fuels. Pursuing Small or New Starts funding for larger projects and major investments is also a consideration. Having a complete picture of the opportunities available to transit systems is necessary to determine the best sources to pursue.

On the state level, discretionary grants include both operating and capital projects under the Service Development and Transit Corridor programs. Service Development is available to fund operational, capital, and marketing improvements/projects on a two- to three-year basis to test or try out new or innovative services or applications. Transit Corridor projects are specifically designed to fund enhanced services within constrained or congested corridors to improve the mode share of transit and help manage congestion.

Leveraging Funds

In addition to the previously noted thoughts about improving the formula funding levels, there are other allowances and strategies available to transit systems to leverage funding and do more with the resources available. First, the use of State Toll Revenue Credits is a Federal allowance to use credits to match capital projects, including for planning, preventative maintenance, and enhanced ADA-related services. Using this resource allows all State and local funding to be used for operating costs, but it does not increase the available allocations. It is important for agencies to contact their FDOT District program manager with specific questions about this resource.

Using other allowances may help, as well, such as the “Capital Cost of Contracting” where operations and maintenance expenses that fund contracted services could be capitalized and matched at 80/20 instead of 50/50 on the federal side. The program has varying levels of allowance depending on the type of contract and services under contract, and is worth investigating when developing annual budgets or contracts for the services.

Understanding the matching allowances and how to develop complete budgets for eligible services is another strategy to consider, as often there are multiple eligible transit services provided by a county but through multiple departments, and each have separate budgets and allocations. For example, a county may have public transit under Public Works or Community Services, while some specialized paratransit services are included under Human Services; if they were combined, the ability to leverage the total budget for both may be a catalyst for expanding resources and increasing services. Each case is unique and would need to be reviewed based on the conditions existing within the jurisdiction, but it may be worthwhile to find opportunities to leverage funds to initiate projects for the TDP Implementation Plan.

Lastly, implementing more efficient services identified through an operational analysis may be a way to improve service, increase efficiency, and move resources to new or enhanced services identified in the TDP Implementation Plan.

Local Funding

Local funding should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the maximum benefit is realized from the investment. There may be opportunities to leverage local funding and increase Federal or State contributions, but, more often, the need to increase local funding and have a stable source is required. Additionally, decisions to raise or reduce the current fare should be evaluated as the impact on ridership must be assessed to determine whether there may be a chance to increase formula funding, as mentioned earlier. Other factors could be important as well, but each TDP should evaluate the local situation and lay out options and ideas on how to improve the local funding abilities of the transit system.

Public/Private Partnerships

Lastly, a number of funding opportunities likely exist in the form of arrangements with private entities, which may include subscription services, grants/awards, in-kind support, and even longer-term agreements to support transit services, from which they or their customers/constituents stand to benefit. Exploring private funding can



begin as easily as reaching out to area employers to determine their willingness and ability to consider providing funding support to promotional programs for transit, subsidized fare passes, or even subscription-style services, all of which are helpful for the agency, but not prohibitive for the private entity.

TDP Implementation Plan

The implementation plan should outline the service, capital, and planning/policy improvements/strategies identified as part of the funded 10-Year Transit Plan, as well as unfunded needs. The plan should indicate the implementation year(s) for all funded improvements; associated operating and capital costs (in the base year of the TDP dollars), regardless of funding availability; any

associated goals/objectives; and, where applicable, any specific funding source(s) for each project. An example implementation plan is provided in Table 3-13. As indicated on the far right column of the example table, it is a valuable practice to tie the implementation plan to the previously drafted goals and objectives for the TDP.

It is important for transit agencies to emphasize that the schedule developed in the implementation plan does not preclude the agency or the community from delaying or advancing any improvements, as implementation plans are subject to change. The implementation plan may be adjusted as priorities shift, funding assumptions change, or in the event that more funding becomes available. The changes in implementation and shifts in priorities should be reported in the next APR.

Table 3-13: Sample TDP Implementation Plan

TDP Improvement	Implementation Year	Annual Operating Cost	Total Capital Cost	Revenue Sources	TDP Goal/ Objective
		(2018\$)	(2018\$)		
Maintain Existing Service					
Maintain Existing Fixed-Route Service	2018	\$ 2,591,420	\$ 3,720,000	Existing	1.1
Maintain Existing Paratransit Service	2018	\$ 531,052	\$ 400,000	Existing	1.2
Improvements to Existing Routes					
Double Frequency on all Existing Routes	Unfunded	\$ 2,608,299	\$ 2,790,000	N/A	3.1
Add Sunday Service on all Existing Routes	2025	\$ 209,611	N/A	Existing	3.3
New Service Expansion					
Fixed-Routes					
Downtown Circulator	2027	\$ 385,463	\$ 465,000	N/A	4.2
Regional Express	Unfunded	\$ 308,370	\$ 465,000	FDOT Urban Corr./Local	4.4
Flex Routes					
North Community Flex	2020	\$ 308,370	\$ 80,000	FDOT Service Dev./Local	4.5
South County Flex	Unfunded	\$ 616,741	\$ 160,000	N/A	4.5
Capital/Infrastructure Improvements					
Shared Park-and-Rides Lots	2022-2025	N/A	No cost	N/A	6.1
Bus Stop Infrastructure Program	2019-2027	N/A	\$ 50,000	Local Mobility Fee	2.1
ADA Improvements Annual Allocation	2019-2027	N/A	\$ 50,000	Existing	2.2
Technology Improvements	2018-2027	TBD	TBD	N/A	7.1
Policy/Technology/Other Improvements					
Agency Branding and Marketing Program	2018-2027	\$50,000		Private-Public Partnership	8.2
Employer Outreach Program	2018-2027	No cost		N/A	8.3

Monitoring Program

A monitoring program can help ensure that the goals established in a previous component of the TDP are achieved. Such a program can establish and track progress made toward implementing the recommendations and be compared with the established goals and objectives, which also can aid in compiling APRs. The previous development of clearly stated, measurable goals and objectives are a prerequisite for an effective monitoring program. In some cases, the efficiency and effectiveness measures discussed in Section 3.2 of this handbook are appropriate considerations for a monitoring program that can provide insight into the quality of the service provided at a more granular level than only tracking progress toward goals and objectives. However, in order to effectively monitor changes in performance and progress toward goals and objectives, comparisons must be drawn to past levels of performance, peer performance levels, or other benchmarks. Finally, a robust monitoring program can help provide a clear implementation status for each project in subsequent APRs, as well as a description of how the improvement has performed thus far, permitting that sufficient data have been collected.

Plan Performance Comparisons

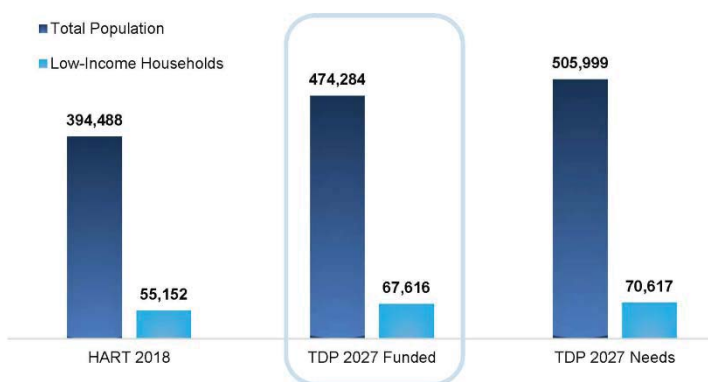
After the completion of the financial plan, it is prudent to conduct a comparison of the existing transit system to both the funded plan network and the needs plan network for the horizon (i.e., tenth) year of the TDP. This effort can allow agencies to contrast differences in ridership levels or total populations being served using ArcGIS and TBEST tools for the respective networks, as shown in Figure 3-18.

Agencies also can estimate differences between each network's ability to serve particular population segments (e.g., employees or Title VI population segments such as low-income or minority), which can be potentially helpful information when making the case for a TDP's adoption.

Marketing Program

An emerging best practice is to include an emphasis or expansion of general marketing efforts that transit agencies conduct in order to raise the awareness of existing services, highlight the benefits of the TDP's recommendations, and grow support for the implementation of its proposed alternatives after the TDP adoption. Transit agencies have ongoing marketing budgets and efforts; however, elevating the awareness about existing services and potential improvements can help strengthen the position of transit within the community. For example, one means to help transit agencies promote existing services is by ranking

Figure 3-18: Projected TDP Performance by Population in Service Area and Ridership Growth



Source: HART TDP, 2017



Source: BCT TDP, 2012

routes based on their comparative performance (e.g., through a performance monitoring program); in this fashion, those that fall below a specified threshold can receive extra marketing attention.

TDP Adoption—Ensuring Support at the End

Pursuing the adoption of a TDP for the sole purpose of accessing block grant funding is not a formula for success and does not support meeting the needs of the community. The identification of potential system improvements should serve as a catalyst for change, but any change first requires the governing board, or relevant approving body, to adopt a plan that it believes in, is excited about, and is eager to share with constituents throughout the TDP's implementation process.

So, how does a plan get adopted that can set the stage for real change and growth? The following guiding principles are provided to help plan and guide the creation of a 10-Year Transit Plan that will engender consensus, be adopted, and have a real chance to impact the community. While this list of principles is not required in entirety, the more that are adhered to, the greater the likelihood of success.

- A plan has to be relevant to the community;
- The decision-makers need to understand that the local community's and the region's goals, issues, and concerns will be addressed by the plan's implementation;
- When the governing board "owns" the plan, it helps sell the recommendations and approves actions as part of the implementation;
- Tools and analyses are deeply integrated into all parts the plan's development process;
- The governing board fully understand what a TDP is, and what a TDP is not; and

- Citizens understand, support, and even advocate for the plan.

These principles provide a general compass that should empower a transit agency to produce a viable plan that will be adopted and implemented.

3.9 Plan Implementation & Coordination

Creating the vision for transit and obtaining the approval of the decision-makers who approve the budget required to implement the TDP is really only the first step in a longer process of bringing the TDP to fruition. The ultimate success of the TDP requires the balancing of the technical challenges with the art of navigating the local funding and political landscapes. This balancing act necessitates that a transit agency develops and leans on its competence, consistency, and political acuity, as well as remains highly resilient and able to absorb and successfully respond to both praise and criticism during the process.

To empower transit agency leaders and staff to make this transition, and prepare them to maneuver through the challenges ahead as the TDP's recommendations evolve into implementable projects, this section provides useful tools of the trade, tips, and philosophical guidance for implementing TDP recommendations and integrating them into the agency's existing operations, as well as the

Table 3-14: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Plan Implementation and Coordination	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
Post-adoption TDP outreach		✓
Consistency with key state and local plans*	✓	
Consistency with regional transportation goals and objectives	✓	
Coordination with FDOT Work Program	✓	
Coordination with other local plans	✓	

* At a minimum, TDPs must be consistent with the Florida Transportation Plan, the local government comprehensive plans, and MPO LRTP.

3.9 Plan Implementation & Coordination	85
Beyond TDP Adoption.....	85
Planning to Implement Recommendations.....	87
Plan Coordination/Integration.....	89

Chapter Contents

planning fabric of the community and the region. Starting at plan adoption, this section provides key elements to consider as an agency implements its plan to successfully grow the system into the vision its community envisaged.

Beyond TDP Adoption

Post-Adoption Outreach—Role of TDP Executive Summary

The techniques and approaches to planning have evolved over time and the means through which transit agencies engage and interact with the public are not necessarily the same as when the TDP was first required by Florida Statute in 1991. The proliferation of communication technologies, the advent of social networking platforms, and changes in generational preferences are a few of the influential aspects that have changed the landscape of public engagement. In this context, the mark of success is the ability of an agency to use every available promotional tool to capitalize on these opportunities and demonstrate the savvy required to engage in today's public forums.

In order to ensure that a TDP will be implemented, as well as help advance any additional goals for the agency, the promotion of the TDP should extend beyond the adoption of the TDP. One promotional tool, the Executive Summary, has emerged as an effective medium to continue generating support for the TDP's recommendations. The TDP Executive Summary should not be a simple, shortened summary of the full report. Instead, it should be a concise packaging of key findings and recommendations, and include engaging visuals accessible to all audiences.

A few guiding principles for an effective Executive Summary include:

- Short, no more than 20 pages (12–16 is ideal);
- Easy to read and understand;
- Easy to reproduce;
- Printed in a booklet format;
- Contains appealing graphics and easy to understand charts;
- Light on written content; and
- Highlights and tells the story of “what’s in it for me” for all audiences.

Continued Marketing & Outreach

The TDP is not the only effort transit agencies undertake in order to guide system development and conduct efficient operations. Other planning efforts include service initiation efforts, marketing programs and campaigns, and budget plans, to name a few. Considering that these other efforts often have separate public outreach efforts and that the TDP has already defended its recommendations, it behooves a transit agency to leverage future outreach as a platform for promoting the TDP. The obvious intention and ultimate benefit of promoting the TDP after its adoption, including through the use of previously developed marketing collateral (e.g., branding), consists of improving the likelihood of achieving the implementation plan.

Expounding upon the branding example, a brand created for a TDP can serve as the foundation for a post-TDP marketing campaign, which can be developed for the full TDP implementation plan or individual recommendations. There is no need to begin such a campaign from scratch.

Executive Summary

Charlotte Rides TDP, Charlotte County, FL

Charlotte County used its TDP Executive Summary to continue spreading support for the TDP. The document included a concise packaging of key findings, recommendations, and engaging visuals accessible to all audiences.



Case Study



Building on TDP Efforts/Relationships

If the agency effectively identified advocates and educated the public during the TDP process, it also can leverage those relationships to continue building support for the eventual implementation strategies. These individuals may serve as facilitators for a “grassroots” outreach program or could become transit cheerleaders/ambassadors that can provide a foundation/support network for future outreach. These future efforts can build upon the tools and lessons afforded by the TDP and aid in prioritizing specific target markets to engage.

Planning to Implement Recommendations

In theory, if the TDP has been adopted and the transit agency is initially empowered with the tools and support necessary for pursuing the recommended alternatives, then the agency will be able to adhere to the implementation plan, do so according to schedule, and without opposition. However, this is rarely the case. In the real world, a changing operating environment is to be expected. Elected board membership turnover, community demographic shifts, traffic flow and volume changes, and changes in many other elements that influenced the recommendations and decisions made at the time of adoption are common operating environment changes.

Additionally, the more time that separates the present from the TDP’s adoption date, the greater the chance is that changes in the operating environment and context will have an impact on the recommendations. Therefore, preserving public support, as well as funding and operational support, is critical to ensuring that benefits are delivered to the community. This also will help ensure that the overall relevancy of the TDP will be preserved until its next major update.

The Best Promotional Tool

Remember, your system’s success is the major promotional tool for funding partners and non-riders, while your operators are your front-line representatives with your customers.



Funding “Plan of Action”

Funding is usually the critical factor that determines whether a recommendation can be implemented, and this challenge is particularly important for the TDP because its nature is not that of a budget, meaning that it is not binding. In order to organize efforts toward securing funding for the TDP’s recommendations each year, the transit agency should develop a “Plan of Action” that addresses each of the recommendations and outlines steps to take in the current year and succeeding years in order to ensure the best chance possible of securing the needed funding.

Possible components of a “Plan of Action” may include:

- Potential funding or revenue sources;
- Targeted funding and application cycles with due dates, contracting times and durations, and types of services eligible;
- Meetings with stakeholders and decision-makers; and/or
- Operations and marketing plans.

Operational Support

The most effective TDPs are those that establish the vision and blueprint for how a transit system will function and grow over the timeframe of the plan. However, a successful blueprint leaves much to determine about exactly how a recommended alternative will be incorporated into the existing network from an operational perspective.



The implementation of the recommended alternatives requires the involvement of the agency's operations and management teams. An agency needs to plan the details for operating the service to ensure that it can function as planned in the TDP. Such planning can provide the following benefits to the transit agency:

- Verify that the environment, operating conditions, and route details in the TDP are still correct and applicable to the new service;
- Provide the operating details to run the service effectively;
- Allow staffing needs to be fulfilled;
- Inform the driver assignment process and shift changes;
- Feed customer service with the information needed to prepare and distribute route maps and other information needed by riders; and
- Direct operations for scheduling drivers and making pull-outs.

This process is critical to ensuring that all of the appropriate personnel and resources are involved and contribute to the successful launch of a new service.

Progress Beyond Adoption

The TDP should result in a phased implementation plan that helps guide and encourage progress toward growing the transit system. The TDP is also a resource that can assist transit leaders with making the case to decision-makers that there is real value in their investments to transit services and facilities. Whether funds are needed for required items to meet ADA accessibility standards, or to retain or add services to ensure that Title VI-protected citizens are appropriately served, when required, the TDP should be a tool and resource in a local transit agency's arsenal to justify and explain the reasons for increased or continued investment. Another tool an agency should consider using is the TDP APR. Through the TDP and subsequent APRs, needed transit services and actions can be reiterated and prioritized for the life of the TDP.

Ensuring Progress Beyond Adoption

However the TDP is funded, transit agencies should do the following to build and maintain momentum during the implementation of the TDP recommendations after adoption:

- Use the public and stakeholder support and advocates gained during the TDP development process
- Ensure being a good steward and being able to demonstrate that the system is efficiently and effectively using tax dollars
- Have a good system identification and marketing plan and approach, starting with the TDP tools and resources (brand, executive summary, governing board ownership, etc.) that has been described elsewhere in this document/section
- Ensure that the other local partners or entities involved or impacted are on board, understand, and support any new services
- Keep the implementation plan and priorities fresh in the minds of the governing board and others by using the APR process effectively
- Use the collected data and TDP tools to show that it makes sense to move ahead

TDP Annual Progress Reports

The TDP and its APRs serve as a resource to assist transit agencies with elevating the value of transit within the community. In subsequent years of the TDP's implementation plan, the APRs can provide needed impetus to reiterate the benefits of the recommended alternatives.

The components and benefits of APRs will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this handbook; however, it is important to note here that these reports can provide helpful attention and re-certification of support for the recommended alternatives.

Plan Coordination/Integration Comprehensive Operational Analyses & TDPs

COAs evaluate an agency's current transit operations at a single point in time and then determine how best to improve its operations in the near term. Effective coordination on the timing of and resources committed to a COA, as well as that of a TDP, may benefit an agency immensely in its goal to provide efficient transit services.

When it comes to the timing of conducting a COA, agencies may find the greatest benefit by performing a single planning effort that includes a COA conducted first and then followed by a TDP. The findings of the COA can be fed into the TDP's capital and operational recommendations for the initial years of the 10-year plan. In this way, the COA is used to set the program for near-term system improvements, while the TDP process helps identify potential longer-term needs that will support the continued growth and improvement of the overall transit system. A hybrid TDP that combines most of a complete COA effort, or only certain elements of a COA, may also be an option. A hybrid approach may be fiscally attractive; however, the potential to shortchange the benefits of doing a full COA exists.

The option of doing a full COA at the same time as a TDP also is a consideration. Though both of these key planning processes can be completed in conjunction with one another, the completion of the COA should occur at least early on in the TDP process. In any case, it is recommended that a transit agency conduct a COA at least every five years to maintain the operational health of its services.

COA Basics

Specific objectives of a COA typically include the following:

- Evaluate service quality versus service coverage;
- Increase system performance;
- Increase ridership;
- Improve system connectivity; and
- Position the system for the future.

A COA's primary focus is to perform an efficiency/effectiveness analysis of the current transit system and conduct a detailed stop-level and route-by-route ridership analysis through the use of ride check/APC data. At a minimum, the performance of the existing services is evaluated with the intention of identifying potential issues and developing beneficial modifications that could improve the overall service provided by the transit agency. The result of such an evaluation may lead to the reallocation of resources; modifications to service area coverage, levels of service, and/or service types; and the maximization of system efficiencies.



Cost Savings

When an agency decides to conduct a COA and TDP in tandem, many of the analyses remain discrete and separated; however, there are areas where cost savings can be found on related tasks, project management, and data collection efforts, though upfront coordination is required. Due to the need to conduct separate analyses and provide separate recommendations, the efforts should still largely be considered to be separate; however, when opportunities for cost savings are effectively managed, potential savings may be as high as 33 to 50 percent for one plan, or 20 to 25 percent overall.

Public Outreach

A key difference between a TDP and a COA is the lack of a need for significant public involvement as part of a COA. However, in order to implement a COA's recommendations, detailed service plans will need to be prepared, federally-required Title VI assessments will need to be completed, and a potential formal public hearing should all be accompanied with some level of public outreach. Therefore, by combining a COA with a TDP, the COA can reap the benefits of the outreach coordination and brand established for the TDP.

Coordination with Other Plans

As part of the TDP development process, other plans and priorities should be integrated into the TDP. Ensuring consistency with key state, regional, and local plan priorities should be a primary focus of the TDP, including any local or regional transportation goals and objectives. Relevant plans should influence the TDP analysis and decision-making process, and the TDP should build upon the recommendations and lessons from these plans to help further advance community goals and priorities. Finally, the TDP should highlight how other plans and priorities have influenced and changed the TDP analysis or decision-making processes.

Additionally, a new requirement for transit agencies is the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan. For many agencies, coordinating and possibly integrating TDP and TAM efforts makes sense because both are designed to govern investment strategies based on needs.

Informing Other Plans

Upon completion and adoption, the TDP serves to document how the system will meet or serve citizens with disabilities, senior riders, and populations that fall under Title VI protections.

The analyses completed during the TDP can and should be used to help update required plans for ADA access and Title VI service provisions. Furthermore, the TDP can help

other entities with subsequent planning efforts. For example, the TDP implementation plan can provide input to local comprehensive plans, Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Needs Plan, FDOT during the development of its 5-Year Tentative WP; and to the MPO during the development of its UPWP and TIP. These potential applications of the TDP require the plan to be vetted and include a cost affordable element to ensure that amendments are limited. Additionally, MPO efforts in preparing the LRTP and CMP also can leverage the recommendations from the TDP.

In conclusion, intention and upfront consideration are key components in ensuring that such planning efforts are integrated and support each other.

4

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT




4.1 Introduction

As discussed in previous chapters, the TDP is required to go through a major update every five years. However, in the subsequent four years, an annual progress update is required to be submitted to the appropriate FDOT District Office by a September 1st deadline. Over the years, this update has taken many forms and included varying levels of detail, often varying in length from a few pages to quite a voluminous document. The TDP Rule defines only what the annual progress update must include at a minimum and provides little guidance on the standard format. Many transit agencies continue to submit their updates with varying levels of consistency or similarity to each other with regard to format and length. This variety has been problematic, requiring FDOT to:

- Allocate extra effort to review submitted updates for compliance and searching within reports for the required elements;
- Reformat submitted information for use in district and statewide reports to the Legislature and/or Governor's office, among others; and
- Compile additionally requested information initially not included in the update report.

While it is the goal of the FDOT Transit Office to provide guidance and flexibility to transit agencies of different sizes and operations when preparing annual progress updates, it also identifies the need for consistency in data and reporting information. To that end, the guidance in this chapter has been developed to foster and guide the annual progress update process required of all transit systems in Florida.

4.1 Introduction	92
4.2 Objectives	92
4.3 Requirements & Format	94
4.4 Report Components.....	94
4.5 Benefits of APRs	98
Renewed Awareness	98
Provide Feedback	98
Public Involvement	98
Expanded Planning Horizon.....	99
4.5 FDOT Approval Process	99



Chapter
Contents

4.2 Objectives

Progress Report

The progress report required by FDOT is needed for several purposes. First and foremost, the update is just that, a progress update, providing an annual check on the progress that a transit agency has made toward implementing the recommendations in the prior TDP major update. Therefore, the annual progress update serves as an Annual Progress Report (APR) for the TDP. In fact, FDOT defines the update as a “progress report” in the TDP Rule.

The TDP APR is needed to accomplish several objectives, including:

- Providing a check-in on the TDP progress made;
- Identifying where progress is not occurring;
- Facilitating updates to the goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in the TDP;
- Prompting updates to the implementation and finance plans;
- Enabling re-evaluations to account for large changes in needs; and
- Ensuring that the TDP recommendations are reviewed periodically.

Based on the requirements listed as part of the TDP Rule, the efforts required to produce an APR are largely localized to a few components of a TDP major update. These components include the following, but, of course, this scope can change if there are significant changes within an agency's operating environment:

- 10-Year Implementation Plan;
- 10-Year Financial Plan; and
- Goals, Objectives & Policies.

While the Goals, Objectives & Policies (GOPs) section is not required to be updated as part of an APR, agencies do need to consider how changes to the implementation plan schedule may impact the pursuit of the GOPs. Oftentimes, this can be facilitated by keeping track of which GOPs are related to each of the projects in the implementation plan, which is discussed subsequently in this chapter.

Alternatively, some agencies choose to include, in an addendum to the APR, specific notes on progress made related to each of the GOPs outlined in the TDP major update.

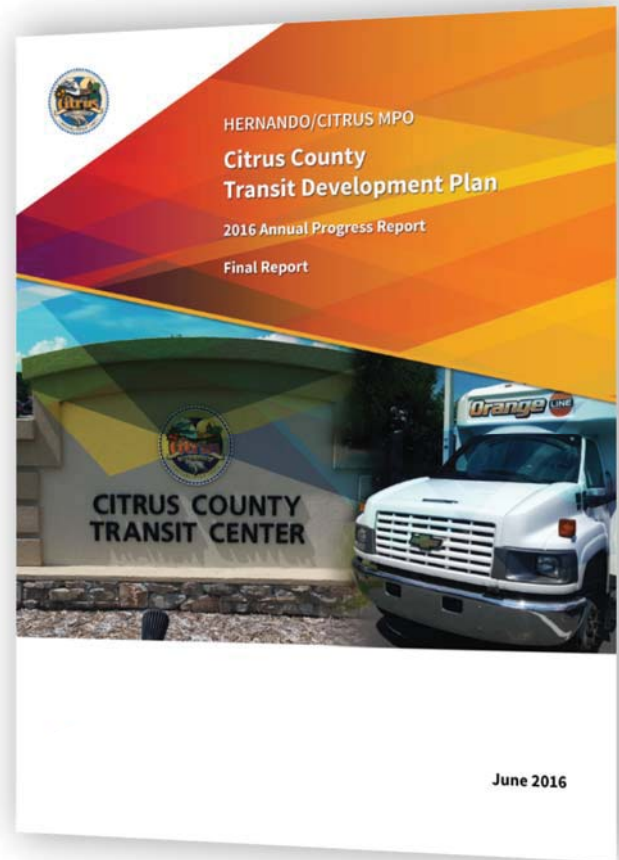


Table 4-1: Annual Progress Report Basics

What & Why of APRs	What APR is Not
Annual report on implementation progress	Minor update to the TDP
Data resource for FDOT reporting	Same format as TDP, just shorter
Update of three key TDP elements	Update of all TDP elements
Update to add new tenth year information	
Self-completed progress report	
Self-completed report on needed changes	
Tool to make TDP an active strategic plan	
Tool to keep TDP in front of governing board and public	
Chance to “blow your horn”	
Opportunity to make the case for help	
Way to help keep TDP needs and goals “fresh”	
Requirement for Public Transit Block Grant	

During the course of meeting the requirements specified in the TDP Rule, it is expected that only the pertinent information will be included as part of the APR. To guide the preparation of an APR, further explanation of each of the requirements, along with examples, is provided herein.

Living Document

As noted in Chapter 2, the TDP process is not intended to confine the agency to a strict implementation plan, but instead empower the agency to continue to incorporate the community's needs and adapt if new priorities emerge. The APR is a key means of ensuring that the TDP remains a "living document" and achieving this standard is one of the report's key objectives. In reality, there is a continuum of exactly how a TDP may serve as "living," ranging from a basic updating of the report to reflect changes in the operating environment to pursuing a more visionary means of sketching the future of the community's transit needs.

4.3 Requirements & Format

The basic requirements of the APR are outlined in Section (4) of the TDP Rule (see TDP Tips above, as well as Appendix A), but, in essence, the APR requires transit agencies to report on the prior year's accomplishments and discrepancies from the plan, revisions needed to the plan, and the addition of a new tenth year to the plan to replace the year just completed. The required and recommended elements of an APR are discussed in the next section, including the suggested format for presenting the data.

This information, summarized for each report component, should help transit agencies meet the requirements established in the TDP Rule. It also should provide transit agencies with report layout ideas for a concise format that will keep the total APR effort to a minimum and foster a consistent format to be adopted throughout the State.

Know the Requirements on APRs



F.A.C. 14.73.001, Section (4) - Annual Update. *Annual updates shall be in the form of a progress report on the ten-year implementation program, and shall include:*

- (A) Past year's accomplishments compared to the original implementation program;*
- (B) Analysis of any discrepancies between the plan and its implementation for the past year and steps that will be taken to attain original goals and objectives;*
- (C) Any revisions to the implementation program for the coming year;*
- (D) Revised implementation program for the tenth year;*
- (E) Added recommendations for the new tenth year of the updated plan;*
- (F) A revised financial plan; and*
- (g) A revised list of projects or services needed to meet the goals and objectives, including projects for which funding may not have been identified.*

4.4 Report Components

Each of the APR components has a specific purpose and FDOT has a specific expectation of the included content and its format. This section outlines each required component and the content that should be included, as well as a discussion on recommended formatting. At the end of this chapter, Table 4-2 provides a quick reference guide of the required versus best practice components of an APR.

A. Last year's accomplishments compared to the original implementation program

A direct comparison should be drawn between the actual progress on the service and capital projects that were

Table 4-2: Annual Progress Report Outline & TDP Rule Required Vs. Best Practice

TDP Annual Progress Report	TDP Rule Required	Best Practice
TDP Annual Progress Report Checklist		✓
Brief System Overview with Map		✓
Public Involvement Summary		✓
Previous Year Accomplishments/Progress Summary	✓	
TDP Goals, Objectives, and Policies Assessment	✓	
Revised 10-Year TDP Implementation Plan	✓	
Revised 10-Year Costs and Revenues/Financial Plan	✓	

stipulated to start or complete during the prior year, versus what was planned according to the prior TDP (e.g., either the TDP major update or APR that was completed most recently). The most effective format to summarize this progress is to list all projects programmed to start or complete during the prior year, either as a bulleted summary or in tabular format, along with a simple status to denote the progress, as shown in Figure 4-1. If the project is complex in nature, or is expected to span multiple years of implementation, then an explanation also should be provided following the table. If implemented or begun, it is important to include the date of implementation. If a project was implemented early enough in the prior year, then it makes sense to include data on performance or impacts to-date.

Based on the table developed to meet this particular component, a short summary should be provided in instances of non-adherence to the prior TDP's

implementation plan. This explanation may be as simple as naming a cause for delay or the need to prioritize another emergent project; however, lengthier explanations may be necessary, if appropriate.

B. Analysis of any discrepancies between the plan and its implementation for the past year and steps that will be taken to attain original goals and objectives

An assessment of the objectives and policies that support the vision, mission, and goals of the TDP should be conducted to meet this requirement of APRs. As shown in Figure 4-2, information from the assessment of the TDP implementation plan, conducted previously for Component A, can be used to assess the status of meeting individual TDP objectives and, therefore, goals. The assessment should be presented in tabular format for easy review.

Figure 4-1: Previous Year Accomplishments/Progress

Route	2016 TDP Service Plan	2016 Result	Notes
14	Realign route to new Cypress Creek Tri-Rail Station.	Not Completed	Extension on-hold until station-area and access redesign/construction completed.
28	Weekday peak service improved from 30 to 20 min.	Not Completed	Re-routing on hold until roadway work on Pembroke Rd. (bridge over I-75) completed.
50	Weekday Peak/Midday service improved to 20 min.	Completed	Service started in April 2016.
60	Weekday Peak/Midday service improved to 20 min.	Completed	Service started in April 2016.
62	Realign route to new Cypress Creek Tri-Rail Station.	Not Completed	Extension on-hold until station-area and access redesign/construction completed.

Figure 4-2: TDP Goals, Objectives, and Policy Assessment

Objective/Policy	Implementation Assessment
Vision Statement: “To be a viable transportation choice for the public in Citrus County.”	
Mission Statement: “Provide an efficient, affordable, safe public transit service that is accessible to all, while improving the quality of life by building a sense of community through connecting neighborhoods.”	
Goal 1: Maintain, improve, and enhance an efficient and safe public transit system that maximizes community benefits through increased mobility opportunities.	
Objective 1.1 – Expand the frequency of service to no more than one hour on all existing routes by 2025 and future routes by 2030.	No action this period. Identified for implementation in 2024 in the 2016-2025 TDP 10-Year Implementation Plan. Now proposed for implementation starting in 2028 as documented in Section 4.
Objective 1.2 – Explore implementation/expansion of a fixed-route public transit system within areas of higher-density residential and employment and mixed-use developments.	No action this period. The Citrus Hernando Express was identified for implementation in 2025 in the 2016-2025 TDP 10-Year Implementation Plan. Proposed service expansions are an unfunded improvements identified for 2036 and beyond as documented in Section 4.
Objective 1.3 – Establish inter-county, regional transit connectivity along at least one major transportation corridor by 2025.	No action this period. The Citrus Hernando Express was identified for implementation in 2025 and the Inverness-Ocala Express an unfunded need in the 2016-2025 TDP 10-Year Implementation Plan. Proposed inter-county, regional service is identified as an unfunded need for 2036 and beyond as documented in Section 4.

In meeting this requirement, the transit agency is provided with the opportunity to begin reflecting, before revising the implementation plan as part of meeting the next requirement, upon why changes may have been necessary. This reflection makes the TDP a truly strategic tool and “living document” for the transit system.

C. Any revisions to the implementation program for the coming year

Based on the discrepancy analysis and other emergent needs of the agency, the transit agency should use the APR to summarize any changes to the implementation plan for the next year. Ideally, the reasons for the changes can be summarized in a brief note as part of the implementation plan summary developed for Component A. However, if the project is complex, spans multiple years, has fundamentally changed, or is a new project altogether, a supplemental paragraph can be provided following the revised implementation program table, as discussed next.

D. Revised implementation program for the tenth year

Agencies should provide an updated 10-year implementation plan as part of the APR, as shown in Figure 4-3. As a result of changes to projects for the upcoming year and any potential cascading effects that these changes may produce on subsequent year plans, all years up through the final implementation year (10th year) of the prior TDP should be reassessed. If for no other reason than to recertify the implementation years that were previously listed, it is important to ensure the accuracy of these projects before adding a new tenth year to the TDP.

E. Added recommendations for the new tenth year of the updated plan

Next, transit agencies will need to determine which projects will be implemented in the new tenth year of the TDP. Whether the projects that are recommended for the new tenth year are brand new additions to the TDP,



continuations of ongoing projects, or are simply projects that have been pushed back in implementation timing, it is important to denote all projects starting, continuing, or completing in the new tenth year of the TDP.

F. A revised financial plan

After summing up all of the changes to the implementation plan from the upcoming year to the new tenth year, agencies need to update the financial plan to be consistent with the new implementation schedule. While updates to a financial plan may consist of straightforward changes to the year to which expenditures or revenues are allocated, the changes also may need to reflect funding source changes (e.g., the availability of a loan program has changed, or other modifications in local revenue sources), new costs and/or technology requirements, and even differences based on modifications/updates to the underlying assumptions in the financial plan.

As shown in Figure 4-4, meeting Component F can consist of a summary table in the same format as the TDP's original financial plan summary, itemizing revenues and costs by type (not necessarily by individual projects or routes) and including an additional column for the new 10th year of the updated plan.

Indicate What has Changed

Changes in an implementation or financial plan may be challenging to identify when looking at the full list of projects that includes many that have not changed. Therefore, it is helpful for readers when agencies can provide a legend or color designation to denote project schedule, cost, or revenue changes apart from the full listing.

G. A revised list of projects or services needed to meet the goals and objectives, including projects for which funding may not have been identified

Using the list of projects included in the TDP major update and any subsequent APR-related revisions to that list, transit agencies should revisit the projects that may be needed to fully meet the TDP goals and objective.

Using lists of funded and unfunded needs, along with any new projects added since the major update, agencies are required to identify the revised list of projects, as necessary, to ensure that their GOPs will be met.

Figure 4-3: Updated 10-Year TDP Implementation Plan

Improvement	Implementation Year	Notes
	Service Improvements	
Improve service frequency to 60 minutes on existing routes	2020	Assumes weekday service only; the addition of Saturday service is included as a separate need.
Extend 3 hours of early/late service on all existing routes	2023	Assumes weekday service only; the addition of Saturday service is included as a separate need.
Citrus-Hernando Express	2024	Identified in the 2040 LRTP Needs Plan as an alternative route via the Suncoast Parkway extension into Citrus County.
Add back Saturday service to existing service	Unfunded Need	Included for implementation in the 2040 LRTP Needs Plan.

Figure 4-4: Revised 10-Year Costs and Revenues

New
10th
Year

Cost/Revenue	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	10-Year Total
Operating Costs											
Maintain Existing Deviated Fixed-Route Transit Services	\$473,984	\$511,903	\$552,855	\$597,083	\$644,850	\$696,438	\$752,153	\$812,325	\$877,311	\$947,496	\$6,866,399
Existing Deviated Fixed-Route Service Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Proposed New Transit Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Maintain Existing Paratransit Services	\$1,385,154	\$1,495,966	\$1,615,644	\$1,744,895	\$1,884,487	\$2,035,246	\$2,198,065	\$2,373,911	\$2,563,823	\$2,768,929	\$20,066,120
Total Operating Costs	\$1,859,138	\$2,007,869	\$2,168,499	\$2,341,978	\$2,529,337	\$2,731,684	\$2,950,218	\$3,186,236	\$3,441,135	\$3,716,425	\$26,932,519
Capital Costs											
Vehicles	\$348,992	\$282,264	\$814,128	\$439,628	\$593,498	\$512,784	\$414,738	\$1,196,221	\$645,958	\$872,043	\$6,120,254
Replacement Vehicles - Buses (Section 5310)	\$348,992	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$512,784	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$861,776
Replacement Vehicles - Vans (Section 5307)	\$0	\$282,264	\$814,128	\$439,628	\$593,498	\$0	\$414,738	\$1,196,221	\$645,958	\$872,043	\$5,258,478
Additional Vehicles for New Deviated Fixed-Route Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Additional Vehicles for Existing Service Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Capital/Infrastructure	\$93,992	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$31,737	\$34,276	\$37,019	\$39,980	\$43,178	\$280,183
RouteMatch Software-Deviated Fixed-Route Module	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Radio System	\$93,992	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$93,992
Bus Stop Infrastructure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$31,737	\$34,276	\$37,019	\$39,980	\$43,178	\$186,191
Total Capital Costs	\$442,984	\$282,264	\$814,128	\$439,628	\$593,498	\$544,521	\$449,015	\$1,233,240	\$685,938	\$915,221	\$6,400,437
Operating Revenues											
Federal Section 5307 for Operating	\$341,861	\$369,210	\$398,747	\$430,646	\$465,098	\$502,306	\$542,490	\$585,890	\$632,761	\$683,382	\$4,952,391
FDOT State Block Grant	\$170,931	\$184,605	\$199,374	\$215,324	\$232,550	\$251,154	\$271,246	\$292,946	\$316,381	\$341,692	\$2,476,203
Existing Local Funds-Other Revenues	\$645,801	\$697,465	\$753,262	\$813,523	\$878,605	\$948,894	\$1,024,805	\$1,106,789	\$1,195,333	\$1,290,959	\$9,355,437
Federal Section 5311 for Operating	\$271,941	\$293,696	\$317,192	\$342,567	\$369,973	\$399,571	\$431,536	\$466,059	\$503,344	\$543,611	\$3,939,490
Commission for TD Operating Funds	\$382,391	\$412,982	\$446,021	\$481,703	\$520,239	\$561,858	\$606,806	\$655,351	\$707,779	\$764,401	\$5,539,531
Farebox Revenues - Existing Service	\$46,213	\$49,910	\$53,903	\$58,215	\$62,872	\$67,902	\$73,334	\$79,201	\$85,537	\$92,380	\$669,468
Farebox Revenues - New and Improved Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Operating Revenues	\$1,859,138	\$2,007,869	\$2,168,499	\$2,341,978	\$2,529,337	\$2,731,684	\$2,950,218	\$3,186,236	\$3,441,135	\$3,716,425	\$26,932,519
Capital Revenues											
Federal Section 5310 for Buses	\$442,984	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$650,889	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,093,873
Federal Section 5307 for Other Capital	\$0	\$282,264	\$814,128	\$439,628	\$593,498	\$0	\$414,738	\$1,196,221	\$645,958	\$872,043	\$5,258,479
Federal Section 5339 For Other Capital	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Section 5339 for New Vehicles	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Capital Revenues	\$442,984	\$282,264	\$814,128	\$439,628	\$593,498	\$650,889	\$414,738	\$1,196,221	\$645,958	\$872,043	\$6,352,351
10-Year Cost & Revenue Summary											
Total Revenues	\$2,302,122	\$2,290,133	\$2,982,627	\$2,781,606	\$3,122,835	\$3,382,572	\$3,364,957	\$4,382,457	\$4,087,092	\$4,588,469	\$33,284,870
Total Costs	\$2,302,122	\$2,290,133	\$2,982,627	\$2,781,606	\$3,122,835	\$3,276,205	\$3,399,233	\$4,419,476	\$4,127,073	\$4,631,647	\$33,332,956
Revenues Minus Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,368	(\$34,276)	(\$37,019)	(\$39,980)	(\$43,178)	\$0
Rollover from Prev. Year	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,368	\$72,091	\$35,073	(\$4,907)	
Surplus/(Shortfall)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,368	\$72,091	\$35,073	(\$4,907)	(\$48,086)	(\$48,086)

4.5 Benefits of APRs

Renewed Awareness

The APR process provides an opportunity to refresh the agency's goals and action plans in the minds of its stakeholders. Furthermore, because a transit agency's staff, elected officials, stakeholders, and interest groups may change with time, the APR provides an opportunity to introduce the TDP to new individuals prior to a major update.

Provide Feedback

Enumerating prior-year accomplishments serves to enable additional feedback on the original plan, as well as provide an opportunity to showcase progress toward meeting the TDP's goals and objectives. Additionally, opportunities for new public engagement also can be undertaken to provide additional perspective on progress made by the agency.

Public Involvement

Although no formal public involvement process is specified for APRs, transit agencies also are encouraged to conduct some level of public outreach during the development process, depending on the magnitude of the proposed service changes identified in the Major Update that may be changing in some manner in the APR.

APRs also can address any broader community changes that may affect elements of the original plan in future years, not just in the current or past year. Depending on the scope of change or deviation from the most recent Major Update, an opportunity for public involvement is advised.

Additionally, post-TDP major update adoption public involvement, as expounded in Chapter 3.9 of this handbook, consists of a continuation of public outreach campaigns when and where valuable, particularly through

leveraging previously-developed content and forums. APRs provide a prime opportunity to summarize what has been done and further advance this post-TDP phase of public engagement.

If provided, the level of outreach should be far more modest and there may even be opportunities to integrate it with other ongoing citizen and community participation initiatives in order to economize on resources.

Remembering that one of the benefits of public participation is the opportunity to both receive feedback and build awareness and support among the community, the more finely tuned the public participation process can be for APRs, the more likely the agency is to benefit.

Expanded Planning Horizon

With each new year, the 10-year timeframe looking forward is incremented by one additional year, adding a new tenth year to the APR. New project additions should be presented with a level of detail and format consistent with that in the original TDP major update and the projects still programmed.

It is recognized that any new tenth-year additions may not always have the benefit of the comprehensive study carried out in the original TDP major update development. However, any project added to the subsequent APRs in the interim years may be modified and evaluated again during the next TDP major update cycle.

4.4 FDOT Approval Process

Like the TDP major update, the APR is required to be submitted to FDOT by September 1st each year, in order for a transit agency to be eligible for the Public Transit Block Grant. FDOT will review and provide comments or approval of the APR within a similar 60-day review period.

What is NOT Included?

While an exhaustive list of non-required components is not really necessary for this handbook since the required topics are addressed in this chapter, here are a few examples that are provided to ensure clarity:

- Public involvement plan
- Extensive outreach activities
- Baseline/existing conditions assessment
- Situation appraisal
- New ridership forecasts



PART

II

FDOT Guidance for Reviewing Transit Development Plans

1

TDP REVIEWER'S GUIDE





1.1 Introduction

The purpose of the reviewer's guide is to provide the FDOT District Offices assistance with their review of TDP submittals. The TDP submittal and approval process is outlined in Chapter 14-73.001 Public Transit of the Florida Administrative Code.

(5) Plan Submission and Approval.

(a) *To be approved by the Department, a TDP must meet all applicable deadlines and address all requirements of this rule, including a public involvement plan that included opportunities for review and comment by interested agencies, and citizens or passengers during the development of the provider's mission, goals, and objectives during the development of alternatives and during the development of the ten-year implementation program.*

(b) *The Department will accept TDPs for review at any time. Provider adopted TDPs must be submitted to the Department by September 1. Late filed TDPs will be accepted if extenuating circumstances beyond the provider's control exist and the District Office is able to complete its review and approval process by the last business day of December. Within 60 days of receiving an adopted TDP or annual update the Department will notify the provider as to whether or not the TDP or annual update is in compliance with the requirements of this rule, and, if not in compliance, a list of deficiencies. Within 30 days of any resubmitted TDP or annual update the Department will notify the provider as to whether or not the resubmission is in compliance with the requirements of this rule.*

(6) Grant Administration to introduction.

(e) *The Department will award public transit grant funds after July 1 of each state fiscal year, but will not award funds until a provider's TDP has been found to be in compliance with this rule.*

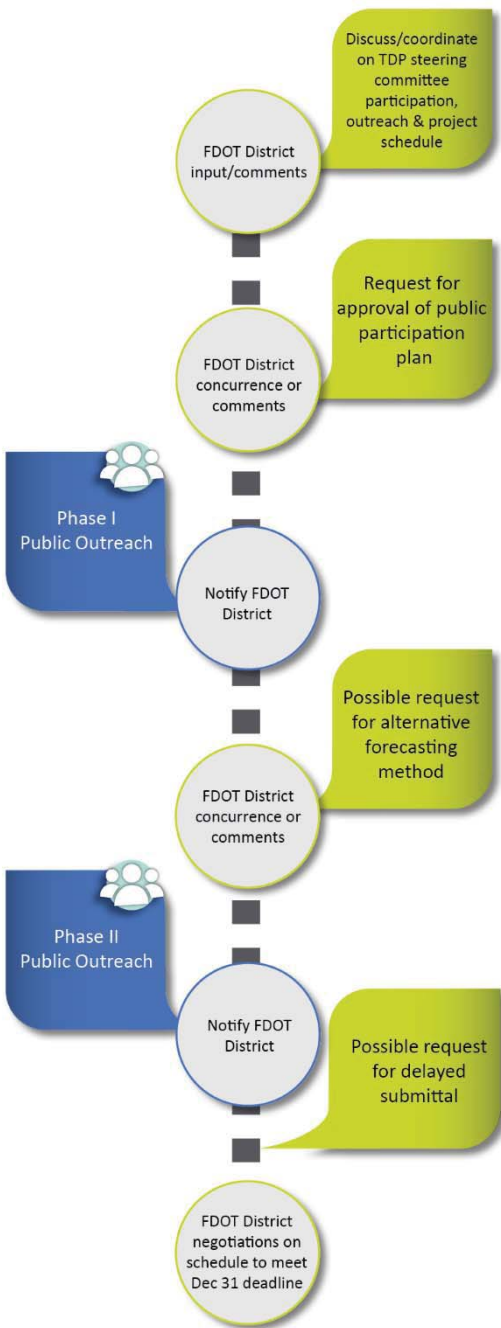
1.1 Introduction	119
1.2 Coordination with the Agencies..	119
Pre-Submittal Approvals	120
During the TDP	120
Review Process.....	120
Review Timeline	121
1.3 Compliance Elements of a TDP	122
Public Participation Process.....	122
Situation Appraisal	122
Agency Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives	122
Alternatives Development & Evaluation.....	123
10-Year Implementation Plan	123
Annual Progress Report	123
1.4 TDP Review Tables	123

(f) *Annual updates and approved TDPs shall be on file at the appropriate District Office by the last business day of December of the state fiscal year for which funding is sought. If a provider's annual report has not been submitted by the last day of December in the fiscal year for which funding is sought, the provider will not receive any state public transit grant funds in that state fiscal year, and funds previously allocated for the provider will be allocated among the remaining providers. If a provider's TDP has not been submitted and found in compliance by the last business day of December of the state fiscal year the annual or five-year update was due, the provider will not receive any public transit grant funds in that state fiscal year, and funds previously allocated for the provider will be allocated among the remaining providers.*

1.2 Coordination with the Agencies

Timely communication and coordination with the agencies submitting a TDP is a key ingredient of a successful TDP in Florida.

Figure 1-1: Communication with FDOT



Pre-Submittal Approvals

Before the final TDP is submitted there are a few formal written communications that FDOT must approve:

- 1) Approval of the public involvement plan
- 2) Approval of an alternative forecasting method (if requested to not use TBEST)
- 3) Approval for late submittal (if requested)

Figure 1-1 outlines these key points of communication between FDOT and the agencies during the plan development process.

During the TDP

Prior to the official kick-off of the TDP, preliminary discussions with the agencies are encouraged and may cover topics such as the proposed project schedule, initial data needs, preliminary public outreach plans, and consideration of whether any steering or advisory committee for the TDP should include a representative from FDOT. During the TDP preparation, discussions can continue, as needed, either as part of an established committee process or informally, and should continue to empower the agency to use the most accurate information available (e.g., forecasts of federal or state funding sources). In summary, it is valuable for FDOT staff to be involved throughout the TDP process to provide guidance and ensure that there are no surprises upon the submission of the plan.

Review Process

TDP major updates and APRs must be submitted for review to the appropriate FDOT District Office on or before the **September 1 due date**. FDOT Central Office, in partnership with the District Offices, maintains an official list of TDP major update due dates. The due dates are posted on the Florida Transit Planning Network (FTPN) website at www.planfortransit.com.

The review period for an initial TDP is **60 days per the Rule, and 30 days for APRs**. District Offices should review the TDP submittal due dates so they are aware of how many agencies in their district are expected to submit major updates and APRs in any given year so they can plan their review time accordingly.

FDOT District Offices are required to determine compliance or non-compliance with the Rule. Feedback to the agency should take one of the following forms:

- **Notification of Compliance with or without comments**
- **Notification of Non-Compliance and itemization of deficiencies**

If the TDP meets all areas of compliance, the FDOT District Office shall send a notification of compliance to the agency. The notification must be sent before the end of December and provide assurance of receipt of apportioned State funds for that fiscal year. If the FDOT District Office has any comments, those comments may be addressed in the next APR. This enables the District Office to share feedback and suggestions with the agency so that future TDP updates can be improved.

If the TDP has been determined to be non-compliant in any area, the FDOT District Office should provide the agency

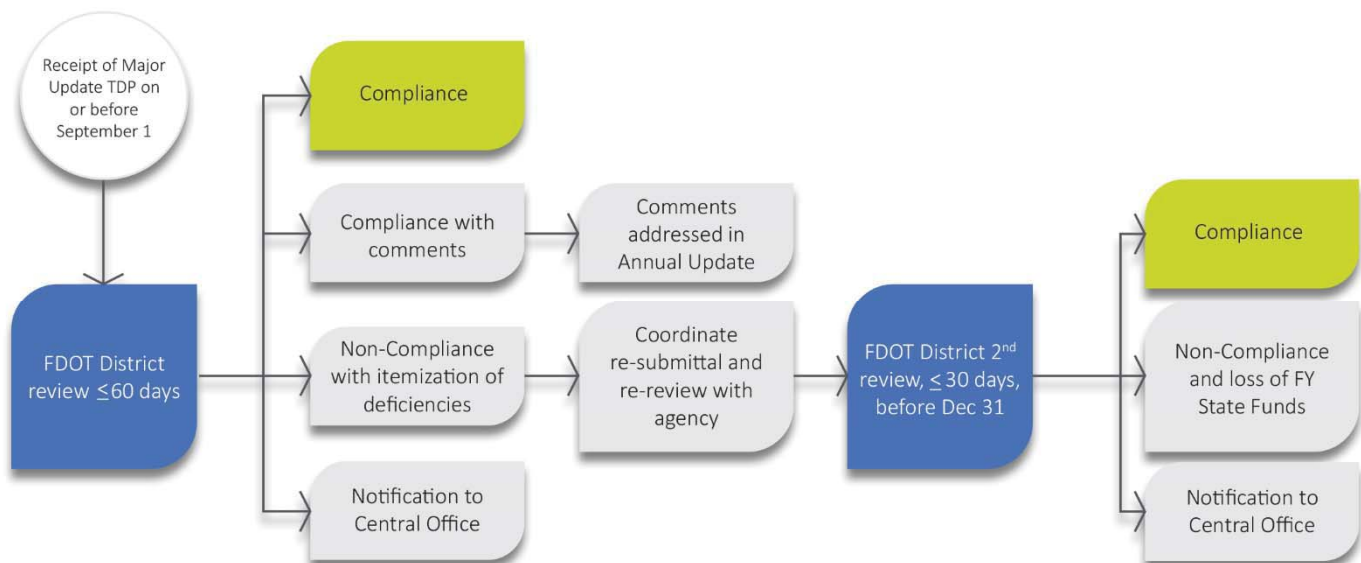
with an itemization of deficiencies that need to be addressed before a second review for compliance. Notices of non-compliance should be copied to the FDOT Central Office, Transit Planning Administrator.

If a TDP is found to be non-compliant, the agency and FDOT District Office should negotiate a schedule and activities for re-submittal. Re-reviews are limited to 30 days by Rule. A re-submitted TDP may need to be reapproved by the adopting governing body, therefore, compliance may be conditional based upon on subsequent governing board approval.

Review Timeline

The TDP Rule establishes review timeframes and steps: September 1-October 31 is the FDOT initial review; November is the transit agency's time to respond and rewrite items that were deemed non-compliant; and December is for FDOT's second review (re-review) of a corrected TDP or specific elements, as appropriate. This schedule (Figure 1-2) ensures that all TDPs are completed by the December 31 date to establish compliance and approve State funds for the fiscal year that starts on the following July 1. Agencies may request an extension to the

Figure 1-2: FDOT Submittal and Review Process for TDPs



deadline and it is to the discretion of the FDOT District Office whether or not to grant the extension.

1.3 Compliance Elements of a TDP

The TDP Rule calls for a number of specific elements that must be addressed in the development of a TDP. The elements listed below are intended to aid FDOT District Office personnel in determining compliance. Determining compliance will involve some professional discernment regarding the completeness and quality of the tasks and information communicated in the TDP. While every effort has been made in the TDP guidance document to support best practices and give examples, the FDOT District Office transit professional has a responsibility to determine compliance with the Rule. Compliance will be evaluated by FDOT District Office staff based on the major elements outlined below:

- Specification of an approved public participation process and documentation of its use.
- A situation appraisal that includes at least:
 - ◊ Effects of land use, state and local transportation plans, other governmental actions and policies, socio-economic trends, organizational issues and technology;
 - ◊ Estimation of the community's demand for transit service using an approved technique; and,
 - ◊ Performance evaluation of service provided in the community.
- The agency vision, mission, goals, and objectives.
- Consideration of alternative courses of action.
- 10-year implementation plan including:
 - ◊ 10-year program of strategies and policies;
 - ◊ Maps indicating areas to be served and types and levels of service;

- ◊ Monitoring program to track performance;
- ◊ 10-year financial plan noting sources and expenditures of funds;
- ◊ Implementation program noting projects and services; and,
- ◊ Relationship to other plans and policies.

Public Participation Process

The Public Involvement Plan (PIP) should be approved prior to initiation of TDP planning. District Office staff should review the PIP to ensure it contains all the necessary elements contained in the Rule and is consistent with the Rule. After approval of the PIP, the District Office should focus on the documentation and execution of the PIP. **Refer to Chapter 3.3 Public Involvement on page 39 for more information on the PIP.**

Situation Appraisal

The transit agency must provide sufficient documentation of their efforts to demonstrate that they fully evaluated the strategic context in which the agency currently operates and that which is likely to develop during the plan period. Evidence should be documented in the agency's descriptions of actions and references to documents as well as in discussion of how the situation appraisal influenced the plan. **Refer to Chapter 3.4 Situation Appraisal on page 49 for more information.**

Agency Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives

The transit agency must provide sufficient documentation of their vision, mission, goals, and objectives. Goals and objectives should line up with the overall vision and mission of the agency. The situation appraisal should serve as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives. **Refer to Chapter 3.5 Goals & Objectives on page 56 for more information.**

Alternatives Development & Evaluation

The TDP should provide evidence of the development and evaluation of various transit alternatives. This could include different levels of service, different route configurations, and different mode investments. **Refer to Chapter 3.7**

Alternatives Development & Evaluation on page 69 for more information.

10-Year Implementation Plan

It is recommended that the financial plan make use of the spreadsheet template provided as part of the TDP guidance. The program of strategies and policies should include more than the financial plan and should reference initiatives and activities that outline the planned path forward. **Refer to Chapter 3.8 10-Year Transit Plan on page 75 for more information.**

Annual Progress Report

An APR shall be in the form of a progress report of the 10-year implementation plan. The APR is intended to be a comparison of actual events as compared to the plan and an assessment of how to address those changes between prior year events and plans as well as the addition of a new tenth year. It should also include adjustments to intervening years to reflect any changes in expectations or conditions. Updates to demographic forecasts, new local, state, or federal legislation and revenue expectations, new technologies, changes in local transportation and land use plans, and related items should be considered in the APR. A revised financial plan should be provided.

The APR may also respond to and address any comments provided by FDOT staff to a compliant major update. **Refer to Chapter 4 Annual Progress Report on page 91 for more information.**

1.4 TDP Review Tables

The following pages are examples of tables that can be used as a checklist by reviewers to ensure all required elements have been addressed. The tables can be used as a communication tool with agencies and may be adapted to each FDOT District Office's preferred format.

Table 1-1: Public Participation Process

Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	Deficiencies	Comments
Obtained public involvement plan approval from FDOT at the initiation of the TDP development process			
Solicited comments from the regional workforce board and/or MPO			
Advised FDOT, the regional workforce board, and the MPO of all TDP related public meetings			
Established time limits for receipt of comments			

Table 1-2: Situation Appraisal

Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	Deficiencies	Comments
Considered comprehensive plan, land use/development forecasts, major changes in land use policies, or changes in land use for major activity centers			
Considered and consistent with state, regional and local transportation plans including goals, objectives			
Considered state, regional, and local actions in areas such as parking, development, transit-supportive design guidelines, economic development, etc., that influence or are influenced by transportation			
Considered organization and technology issues as they impact public transit development			
Documents demand estimation for future transit ridership for various service options using TBEST or approved alternate ridership forecasting technique			
Documents performance analysis of existing service that typically includes peer and trend analysis using NTD data as well as various surveys conducted			

Table 1-3: Agency Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives

Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	Deficiencies	Comments
Documents Agency's vision and mission			
Documents Agency's goals and objectives			
Documents a monitoring program to assist the agency in achieving its goals and objectives			
Provides FDOT, decision-makers, and the public an opportunity to review and comment			

Table 1-4: Alternatives Development & Evaluation

Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	Deficiencies	Comments
Documents development and evaluation of transit alternatives			
Provides FDOT, decision-makers, and the public an opportunity to review and comment			

Table 1-5: 10-Year Implementation Plan

Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	Deficiencies	Comments
10-year program of strategies and policies			
Maps indicating areas to be served and types and levels of service			
Documentation of monitoring program to track performance			
10-year financial plan showing funding sources and expenditures of funds			
Implementation program showing projects and service initiatives over the TDP 10-year period			
Provided list of unfunded needs			
Provided FDOT, decision-makers, and the public an opportunity to review and comment			

Table 1-6: Annual Progress Report

Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	Deficiencies	Comments
Past year's accomplishments compared to the original implementation program			
Analysis of any discrepancies between the plan and its implementation for the past year and steps that will be taken to attain or modify original goals and objectives			
Any revisions to the implementation program for the coming year			
Revised implementation program for the new tenth year			
Added recommendations for the new tenth year of the updated plan			
A revised financial plan			
A revised list of projects or services needed to meet the goals and objectives, including projects for which funding may not have been identified.			

APPENDIX

A

TDP RULE



Appendix A—TDP Rule

14–73.001 Public Transit

(1) Purpose. This rule sets forth requirements for the recipients of the Department’s public transit grant funds.

(2) Definitions.

(a) “Department” means the Florida Department of Transportation.

(b) “District Office” means any of the seven geographically defined districts as set forth in Section 20.23(4)(a), F.S.

(c) “Provider” means a transit agency or a community transportation coordinator as set forth in Section 341.052, F.S.

(3) Transit Development Plans (TDPs). TDPs are required for grant program recipients in Section 341.052, F.S. A TDP shall be the provider’s planning, development, and operational guidance document, based on a ten-year planning horizon and covers the year for which funding is sought and the nine subsequent years. A TDP or an annual update shall be used in developing the Department’s five-year Work Program, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Department’s Program and Resource Plan. A TDP shall be adopted by a provider’s governing body. Technical assistance in preparing TDPs is available from the Department. TDPs shall be updated every five years and include all elements described below.

(a) Public Involvement Process. The TDP preparation process shall include opportunities for public involvement as outlined in a TDP public involvement plan, approved by the Department, or the local Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) Public Involvement Plan, approved by both the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration. The provider is authorized to establish time limits for receipt of comments. The TDP shall include a description of the process used and the public involvement activities undertaken. As required by Section 341.052, F.S., comments must be solicited from regional workforce boards established under Chapter 445, F.S. The Department, the regional workforce board, and the MPO shall be advised of all public meetings where the TDP is to be presented or

discussed, and shall be given an opportunity to review and comment on the TDP during the development of the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and ten-year implementation program.

(b) Situation Appraisal. The TDP is a strategic planning document and will include an appraisal of factors within and outside the provider that affect the provision of transit service. At a minimum the situation appraisal shall include:

1. The effects of land use, state and local transportation plans, other governmental actions and policies, socioeconomic trends, organizational issues, and technology on the transit system.
2. An estimation of the community’s demand for transit service using the planning tools provided by the Department, or a Department approved transit demand estimation technique with supporting demographic, land use, transportation, and transit data. The result of the transit demand estimation process shall be a ten-year annual projection of transit ridership.
3. An assessment of the extent to which the land use and urban design patterns in the provider’s service area support or hinder the efficient provision of transit service, including any efforts being undertaken by the provider or local land use authorities to foster a more transit-friendly operating environment.

(c) Provider’s Mission and Goals. The TDP shall contain the provider’s vision, mission, goals, and objectives, taking into consideration the findings of the situation appraisal.

(d) Alternative Courses of Action. The TDP shall develop and evaluate alternative strategies and actions for achieving the provider’s goals and objectives, including the benefits and costs of each alternative. Financial alternatives, including options for new or dedicated revenue sources, shall be examined.

(e) Ten-Year Implementation Program. The TDP shall identify policies and strategies for achieving the provider’s goals and objectives and present a ten-year program for their implementation. The ten-year program shall include: maps indicating areas to be served and the type and level of service to be provided, a monitoring program to track performance

measures, a ten-year financial plan listing operating and capital expenses, a capital acquisition or construction schedule, and anticipated revenues by source. The implementation program shall include a detailed list of projects or services needed to meet the goals and objectives in the TDP, including projects for which funding may not have been identified.

(f) Relationship to Other Plans. The TDP shall be consistent with the Florida Transportation Plan, the local government comprehensive plans, the MPO long-range transportation plan, and regional transportation goals and objectives. The TDP shall discuss the relationship between the ten-year implementation program and other local plans.

(4) Annual Update. Annual updates shall be in the form of a progress report on the ten-year implementation program, and shall include:

- (a) Past year's accomplishments compared to the original implementation program;
- (b) Analysis of any discrepancies between the plan and its implementation for the past year and steps that will be taken to attain original goals and objectives;
- (c) Any revisions to the implementation program for the coming year;
- (d) Revised implementation program for the tenth year;
- (e) Added recommendations for the new tenth year of the updated plan;
- (f) A revised financial plan; and,
- (g) A revised list of projects or services needed to meet the goals and objectives, including projects for which funding may not have been identified.

(5) Plan Submission and Approval.

(a) To be approved by the Department, a TDP must meet all applicable deadlines and address all requirements of this rule, including a public involvement plan that included opportunities for review and comment by interested agencies, and citizens or passengers during the development of the provider's mission, goals, and objectives during the development of alternatives and during the development of the ten-year implementation

program.

(b) The Department will accept TDPs for review at any time. Provider adopted TDPs must be submitted to the Department by September 1. Late filed TDPs will be accepted if extenuating circumstances beyond the provider's control exist and the District Office is able to complete its review and approval process by the last business day of December. Within 60 days of receiving an adopted TDP or annual update the Department will notify the provider as to whether or not the TDP or annual update is in compliance with the requirements of this rule, and, if not in compliance, a list of deficiencies. Within 30 days of any resubmitted TDP or annual update the Department will notify the provider as to whether or not the resubmission is in compliance with the requirements of this rule.

(6) Grant Administration. Public transit funds will be considered on the basis of public transit needs as identified in TDPs. The Department is authorized to fund up to such percentages as are designated for each type of public transportation project by Chapter 341, F.S., for the respective state and federal projects described therein. The Department shall, within statutory parameters, determine the level of funding participation for each project.

(a) State funding participation in public transit projects and services shall require a duly executed agreement, unless otherwise required by law.

(b) Eligibility to receive state public transit grants from the Department is limited to those providers specifically designated by law to receive such grants, and determined by statutory budgeting and programming requirements.

(c) Written requests for appropriated public transit grant funds by a provider are to be addressed to the District Office in which district the provider operates public transit service. The request shall include at a minimum the name and address of the provider, level of funding being requested, type of funding or program participation requested, and use to be made of the requested funds. Where a deadline for applications has been established, applications received after the deadline shall be returned. Deadlines for each program application may be obtained from the District Office.

Appendix A

(d) Federal funds for which the Department is the primary recipient may involve special application procedures or submittal format, imposed by the federal grantor agency as a condition of receiving federal funds. The provider will be notified by the District Office of special application requirements at the time of submission of a written request for funding if the District Office has not previously distributed such information to the provider.

(e) The Department will award public transit grant funds after July 1 of each state fiscal year, but will not award funds until a provider's TDP has been found to be in compliance with this rule.

(f) Annual updates and approved TDPs shall be on file at the appropriate District Office by the last business day of December of the state fiscal year for which funding is sought. If a provider's annual report has not been submitted by the last day of December in the fiscal year for which funding is sought, the provider will not receive any state public transit grant funds in that state fiscal year, and funds previously allocated for the provider will be allocated among the remaining providers. If a provider's TDP has not been submitted and found in compliance by the last business day of December of the state fiscal year the annual or five-year update was due, the provider will not receive any public transit grant funds in that state fiscal year, and funds previously allocated for the provider will be allocated among the remaining providers.

Rulemaking Authority 334.044(2), 341.041(12)(b) FS. Law Implemented 341.041, 341.051, 341.052, 341.071 FS. History—New 9-24-75, Formerly 14-73.01, Amended 12-8-92, 2-20-07.



























APPENDIX

B

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLBOX



Table B-1: Public Involvement Toolbox

	Outreach Phase				Relative Cost	Relative Effort	Participation Potential
	Zero	One	Two	Post-TDP			
TDP Technical Review Team					Low	Low	
Stakeholder Interviews					Medium	Medium	
Open House Public Workshops					High	Medium	
Traditional Public Workshops					High	High	
Board Visioning Workshops					Medium	Medium	
Transit Planning Charrettes					High	High	
Discussion Groups					High	High	
Bus Operator Interviews					Low	Low	
Meeting in a Box					Medium	Medium	
Grassroots Outreach					Medium	Medium	
Social Media					Low	Low	
Agency Websites					Low/Med	Low/Med	
Email Blasts					Low	Low	
Facebook Live					Low	Low	
Newspaper/Media					Low	Low	
Public Outreach Software					High	Low/Med	
On-Going Comments					Low	Low	
Committee/Board Meetings					Medium	Medium	
Surveys							
On-Board Bus Rider					High	High	
Bus Operator					Low	Low	
General Public – Online					Low	Low	
General Public – Paper					Low	Medium	
Employers/Employees					Medium	Medium	
Intercept					Medium	Medium	
Mail Out					Medium	Medium	
Telephone					Medium	Medium	

TDP Technical Review Team

A TDP Technical Review Team should be established early on to guide the TDP process, review key material, and provide feedback. It should include staff from the transit agency, the local MPO, the regional workforce board, and FDOT (if FDOT desires to participate), but also may include other city/county officials and/or community stakeholders. Regardless of who is included, the total size of the team should be limited to about five to seven members to ensure that the benefits of the TRT are not encumbered by too many voices.

However, transit agencies also may use already available transit advisory groups or committees for this purpose. Because some of these transit advisory committees may represent the bus riding public, they can provide valuable perspectives, opinions, and recommendations on bus service and on potential bus service improvements.

Furthermore, because of the importance of the connectivity of the transit network to other multimodal networks, it is also important to consider including Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) representatives or other key local groups with a vested interest in transit, such as downtown districts, Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRA), and other groups that can help better guide the TDP process.

Stakeholder Interviews

This public input strategy focuses on soliciting ideas, concerns, and comments from key individuals and/or organizations in the study area. Typical stakeholder groups may include local officials, jurisdictional representatives, and organizations with an interest in transit services. Interview scripts with detailed questions related to public transportation in the study area may be used to gather the opinions and perceptions of these stakeholder groups.

The interviews themselves can be conducted in person or via telephone, depending on the availability and the preference of the stakeholders. Further details about ideal candidates for interviews are provided later in this appendix.

Public Workshops

Public workshops provide an opportunity for transit agencies to solicit ideas, opinions, and comments from different target groups through direct information distribution and exchange. Depending on the specific objectives and available resources, interactive public involvement activities also should be employed. Such activities can help facilitate public participation by providing a more interesting and engaging method through which to identify the involved groups' issues and preferences.

Typical benefits of interactive activities may include:

- Increased trust between participants and agency officials
- Higher levels of participant interest
- Improved relations among participants with diverse backgrounds
- Enhanced understanding, communication, and cooperation
- Motivated participants
- Increased individual and group participation
- Reduced conflict

Contingent upon the cost, needs, and effort requirements, two types of public workshops that are applicable to TDPs are discussed; however, it is not necessary to limit public workshop strategies to any one of these types.

Open Houses

An open house is typically the most flexible public workshop format in that it allows the participants to observe displayed information at their own pace. The public is encouraged to arrive at the designated workshop location at any time during the duration of the scheduled open house rather than at a specific time.

The facility should be set up with several stations, each addressing a separate issue, so that a number of people (6-10) can view a particular station at once. Depending on

staffing availability, it is helpful to populate each station with staff who can explain the topic at hand to the public and answer any related questions. Staff also should be present to explain the format of the open house to arriving participants and ask them to sign in at the door.

After participants complete a tour of the stations of interest, they are typically requested to provide feedback via a brief survey of some sort. Additionally, many workshops can incorporate a variety of mediums for educating participants, including but not limited to: display boards, handouts, computers with interactive maps and infographics, and surveys.

Open houses provide an opportunity for the public to address a problem in stages. Open houses also help prevent an individual or single interest from dominating the discussion and, as such, help ensure that more perspectives are heard.

The primary disadvantage of open houses is the inherent difficulty in documenting the multitude of public input that can occur; for this reason, brief survey forms or questionnaires are typically utilized in conjunction with the open houses to help facilitate the public input and preferences documentation process. Increasingly, workshops also are

beginning to utilize tablet computers to collect surveys electronically to reduce collection costs and time, and improve data accuracy.

Dot Polling Exercise

Dot Polling is an interactive exercise that can easily be conducted at an open house workshop. This exercise has been developed to assist agencies in ranking citizen priorities by providing for individual input, while at the same time encouraging group decision-making. Alternatives are ranked based on the number of dots received. Through this process, public-preferred prioritization of a set of alternatives can be achieved. Such an exercise can be used in most other public workshop settings as well, including charrettes or discussion group workshops.

Traditional Public Workshops

This includes public workshops that may have a more formal “sit down” format than the casual setting of an open house. Typically, a formal presentation is included in the agenda with a set time or an information “looped” slideshow runs throughout the workshop. Most of the materials and input gathering techniques used at open houses are also used in this format, such as display boards and surveys.

\$25m = \$25 Million: Small dots are for smaller-scale single-place projects. Examples include a new/expanded station or a parking garage, but only one of these things (i.e., if you’re proposed a Transportation Center with a garage and station, you should use a big dot).

\$100m = \$100 Million: Big dots are for large-scale single-place projects. Examples include Transportation Centers that might have rail stations, parking garages, and bus facilities at one location.

NOTE: Station costs are included in the cost of each dash – there is no need to add dots on top of your dashes.

rail - \$500 m = \$500 Million (\$170 Million/inch): Rail dashes are for proposed rail lines of any type (i.e., trolley/light rail, commuter/regional rail, or subway). The cost reflects the estimated average cost across all types of rail in 2030 dollars.

rapid bus - \$10 m = \$10 Million (\$3.2 Million/inch): Rapid bus dashes are for proposed express bus or Bus Rapid Transit lines. Such projects would include permanent stations, modern vehicles with superior amenities to the typical bus, relatively frequent service, and other improvements.

Figure B-1: Strings and Ribbon Depiction and Example Exercise “Cost Menu”



Appendix B

Strings & Ribbons Exercise

An established public involvement activity that may be used at a public workshop is the strings and ribbons exercise. It is specifically designed to teach citizens about balancing key tradeoffs in transit planning. This activity assists in helping to build community consensus whenever public input is solicited regarding funding issues. The basic structure of the exercise consists of participants using simple materials on a map to adjust the following three components: funding allocation, funding flexibility, and project feasibility.

Once the participants have explored the alternatives, they can begin to note the relative levels of importance of these tradeoffs by using the strings and ribbons to scale and prioritize projects. However, due to the time and instruction required to properly complete such an exercise, this type of resource allocation exercise should be included only if an agency sees the benefits of such an effort.

Board Visioning Workshops & Committee/Board Meetings

By including local political leaders in the outreach process, TDPs can educate leaders on the needs of the community and potential transit improvements, at the same time that their own informed feedback is solicited regarding other unmet needs. Engaging political leaders in the early phases of outreach, especially through the use of visioning workshops, is important to ensuring that these leaders understand the nature and reason for the plan. Additionally, the early engagement of an oversight board through a visioning workshop allows the transit agency to understand the board's priorities for the future of transit service in its jurisdiction. Finally, creating and preserving local allies for the TDP is a helpful approach for ensuring that recommendations developed for local needs achieve consensus and are adopted.

Whether a transit agency decides to use a PIP or follow the MPO PPP, TDP public involvement efforts also will include formal meetings with transit agency advisory com-

mittees, mainly the MPO TAC, BPAC, CAC, and the MPO Board. TAC members consist of professional and technical planners, engineers, and other agency staff from the participating jurisdictions within each corresponding MPO planning area, and feedback from this group is generally more technical in nature. The CAC is comprised of a cross-section of representatives of the community and serves as the “eyes and ears” of the community. These MPO Board and advisory committee meetings are public forums that afford citizens an opportunity to participate in the planning process.

Transit Planning Charrettes

Charrettes for transit are typically invitation-based events, but are most effective when a diverse set of participants, ranging from community members to more prominent public stakeholders, are invited. The cross-fertilization of perspectives and ideas can yield a set of priorities and needs that may not have otherwise been uncovered during other outreach events.

Various idea generation techniques, such as the Nominal Group Technique (a group activity involving problem identification, solution generation, and decision making) can be selected for a TDP charrette to educate the participants and collect feedback for the TDP. To be effective, transit planning charrettes are recommended to occur in the early stages of the TDP process. The activities used during a charrette can be structured in a few ways; however, it is best to use a set of established ground rules and guidelines so that participants have a structured framework for offering feedback and developing creative recommendations for the future of the transit system.

Discussion Group Workshops

Discussion group workshops should normally be scheduled early in the TDP process and should be conducted at central locations that are easily accessible from the entire study area. For a TDP, the discussion group workshop seeks to gather public input regarding existing transit issues and desired improvements. This public involvement

technique typically is designed to be formal and requires an invitation to participate, as invitations for this purpose are extremely beneficial in helping to ensure adequate levels of participation from the organizations, businesses, and other entities that are desired to be included.

Notice is typically provided via emails and follow-up contacts. Stakeholders in the discussion groups may include transit users, non-users, bus operators, stakeholders, and/or other interested individuals or groups. Some examples of discussion group invitees include representatives from social service agencies, business development organizations, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and active citizen groups.

For optimal discussion and interaction, a discussion group should consist of 8 to 12 participants, ideally, though smaller or larger workshops still can be productive with appropriate preparation and facilitation. Survey forms also can be utilized in conjunction with conducting a discussion group workshop.

Some key strategies for ensuring productive conversation include providing participants a brief opening presentation to provide an overview of the TDP and transit agency, suggesting discussion questions or topics, incorporating exercises such as the marking-up of maps, and, at the conclusion of the workshops ensure the verbal participation of stakeholders in future outreach activities (e.g., online survey link distribution at public workshops).

Bus Operator Interviews

Conducting interviews with bus operators, which are often conducted in tandem with surveys, are a valuable means of soliciting feedback from personnel who experience riders, the routes, and the service area firsthand.

Since a transit agency's bus operators are in direct contact with riders every day, they are an invaluable source of information concerning public opinion and attitude about the daily operation of the agency's transit services. As such, it often is prudent to conduct interviews with opera-

tors to get their input on a variety of topics. It is important to keep the operator input as anonymous as possible to encourage their honest and open participation.

Meeting in a Box

This novel meeting concept provides stakeholder groups with all the materials necessary to hold a successful self-guided meeting hosted by volunteers, often from the stakeholder group itself. These small groups (10-15 people) can meet wherever it is most convenient to discuss a specific set of topics that have been prepared, along with instructions and materials, by the transit agency. During the meeting, important feedback is recorded by volunteers or as part of the included activities themselves, which eventually are returned to the agency for review.

Since participants only need to provide their opinions, it is not necessary to cover detailed information on the meeting topics. Additionally, because of the flexibility of where and when these meetings can occur, and who can attend, many traditionally underserved population segments and diverse age groups often can take part in such meeting-in-a-box events. Since meetings are often organized through the invitation of peers, and combined with the informal nature of the event, candid feedback is typically produced. Finally, because of the positive impressions that participants have as a result of these meetings, many remain more engaged throughout the remainder of the process thereafter.

Grassroots Outreach

This is a strategy that mostly takes advantage of existing events or gatherings by "piggy-backing" on them to capture input from the public. This might include participating with a table/display and a few staff at town hall meetings, fairs, festivals, malls, transit stations, and/or special events. It could include taking a transit vehicle to a public location or major gathering place and facilitating an informal meeting onboard. Grassroots outreach can draw upon a diverse crowd and is particularly effective in gathering input from a broad audience that might not be motivated

Appendix B

to participate in a single purpose meeting. This can help expose the TDP to the general public, whose interest might include being a customer or potential transit customer, but also might be restricted to being a taxpayer primarily interested in the stewardship of their public resources.

By its nature, grassroots outreach can take many forms and, because of the comparatively informal nature and the opportunity to make use of available events, it also is an inexpensive method through which to collect public input. A few tactics that may be employed in order to encourage participation from the public, whether piggy-backing on another event or simply locating in a public place, include: offering free souvenirs, prizes, or refreshments for participation; partnering with local businesses; publicizing project information through local and ethnic community outlets; coordinating with local churches; and attending already scheduled community meetings.

Social Media

The advent and proliferation of social media during the last decade has demonstrated its capability to function as a communication tool for more than just individuals. Unfortunately, it also has ushered in an era of uncertainty around how such tools can best be used for other purposes by companies, government, and, more generally, special interest campaigns. To some degree, transit agencies and TDPs intersect with all three of these entities, which further complicates the answer of how social media and online tools can best be deployed to meet the goals of a transit agency. To this end, awareness, education, and information collection are the three primary goals pursued thus far by transit agencies.

Based on discussions with TDP project teams and the review of recently completed TDPs, some of the following practices can be considered in order to maximize the value of using social media for TDPs.

- **Use Existing Pages/Accounts** – Instead of creating a brand new standalone page or account for a TDP pro-

ject, consider using existing pages with established followers and a recognized brand. If helpful, a dedicated page within an existing site, or project-specific hashtag or equivalent, can be created to help designate project-specific materials and communications.

- **Get Promoted by Partners** – There is no need to manage social media communications entirely without help. Relying on partners such as local governments, MPOs, community groups, and other transit advocates to help syndicate your messages and raise support/awareness for the TDP is a helpful and cost-effective option.
- **Consider Advertising/Boosters** – Paying for advertisement boosters on Facebook has been effectively utilized to draw attention to online surveys and in-person events, according to exit polls. Therefore, if all else fails, online advertising is a moderately priced means of reaching target audiences.

While social media may be the best medium to reach millennials and tech-savvy individuals, some segments of the general population have been slow to adopt new technologies such as social media due to the high cost of accessing high-speed Internet services, visual impairment, low-literacy, language barriers, lack of computer literacy, or general discomfort or uncertainty with respect to the technological changes. However, smartphone usage continues to grow among nearly all populations, including older, minority, and low-income persons. With the proliferation of mobile technology, it is increasingly possible to rely on improved communication and access to social media platforms for outreach purposes.

Agency Websites

For agencies that do not have an established social media presence, or simply have a well-established and utilized website, using existing webpages also can provide a medium for TDP outreach efforts. Similar to social media efforts, adding content such as updates, documents, event information, and even survey links are low-cost efforts

that may spark discussion, bolster turnout/response rates, and raise awareness about the TDP or the transit agency. While not every online user who visits a webpage consumes substantial content, the opportunity to raise awareness and enhance education are long-term pay-offs that justify the effort and expense.

Email Blasts using Community Contact Databases

The key to successful email blasts is the creation and continual update of a contact database, which also can help a variety of other public outreach activities during the TDP and beyond. A contact database can include stakeholders from many backgrounds, such as political leaders, community activists, business owners, engaged citizens, and many others. In creating a database for the TDP, a transit agency can strengthen its network and overall knowledge of existing community organizations and leaders. This improved knowledge also makes it possible to quickly identify and include organizations that engage traditionally underserved populations.

The database can be used to ensure that information is being transmitted to as wide a range of community members as possible. Identifying these contacts does not guarantee outreach, but, over time, cumulative attempts at engagement and the development of relationships outside of a TDP project will help to produce the level of engagement required of TDP outreach efforts.

The value of a community contact database grows with the quality of the relationships it represents, which must be grown through the cultivation of these contacts. However, the value of individual contacts can be amplified by means of leveraging the networks of the contacts themselves, for instance, by reaching out to the constituents of a given contact and soliciting referrals of other contacts to add to the database.

In the early stages of the development of a database, relying on formal or informal community ambassadors and advocates can help establish the credibility of the transit

agency efforts and further expand what will hopefully become a living, growing database.

Facebook Live

Along with the advent of social media, Facebook Live has proven to be a prolific engagement tool for transit agencies. Broadcasts of public meetings of all different kinds can be made simply through the use of a smartphone device with an internet connection. To ensure that viewers watching online are fully engaged in the experience and are able to provide the most constructive feedback, it is important to cater any visuals developed for the meeting and all ensuing discussions to the online viewers to ensure that they can see and hear the proceedings without issue.

Newspaper/Media

While printed newspaper may not reach as wide of an audience as it did years ago, newspaper media is still an effective method of reaching citizens, especially considering that most newspapers are also available online. Newspaper ads and articles on the TDP outreach can still generate significant awareness if timed correctly and use the right newspaper for the desired target audience.

Public Outreach Software

Using various software platforms at public workshops and online to inform and obtain feedback has also become popular in recent years. While some of these tools can be relatively expensive and may need licensing agreements or grant funding to cover the costs, there are also less expensive options available to transit agencies. The capabilities/functionalities of these tools can range from simple online and tablet/smartphone-based surveys using Survey Monkey to more elaborate online public outreach software, which can provide pages with information and an interactive method for collecting input. Route planning software such as Remix also can also aide in showing demographic data alongside potential new services during a workshop or discussion group, for instance. These are only a few examples of how new software can be integrated into public

outreach. However, because some of these tools require considerable cost, transit agencies should evaluate whether the costs are worth the benefits for their unique situation.

On-Going Public Comments

It is important to emphasize that public involvement is an ongoing process and that feedback and comments about service should be collected by transit agencies throughout the year. Transit agencies receive comments from the public on a daily basis via e-mail, letters, and telephone. Appropriate feedback for a TDP update process would include suggestions that go beyond existing daily operations. Examples include recommendations for new service, service expansions, and/or additional transit infrastructure. This feedback should be integrated into the TDP preparation process as appropriate.

In addition to input received directly, agencies should assess input/findings from transit-related study efforts that are ongoing or have been recently completed.

Transit Surveys

Surveys are an effective tool for obtaining information about potential transit service improvements, assessing travel characteristics and perceptions of bus riders, and ascertaining other important feedback about public transportation from other stakeholders, such as non-users and/or major employers in the community. Feedback from surveys can assist transit agencies in identifying potential future transit needs. Common survey tools generally used by transit agencies during the TDP process are summarized in the next sections.

On-Board Survey

On-board surveys are used by most, if not all, transit agencies to gather feedback on various aspects of a transit agency's operations and services directly from patrons. This information is extremely useful to determine how the transit agency can improve and/or ensure the quality of its services. Typical aspects that should be covered by an on-board survey include the following:

- Travel Characteristics – questions about individual trip attributes.
- Rider Demographics – questions about who is using the system.
- Customer Service & Opinions – questions about potential service improvements and customer service preferences.

Transit Operator Survey

A transit operator survey differs from all the other presented survey types as it targets transit vehicle operators rather than transit patrons, transit non-patrons, or other interested groups external to the transit agency. Since a transit agency's operators are in direct contact with riders every day, they are an invaluable source of information concerning public opinion and attitude about the daily operation of the agency's transit services. As such, it is often prudent to conduct a survey for operators to get their input on a variety of topics. Operators can provide information on various complaints and/or desired improvements that they observe or hear from transit patrons, thus helping to corroborate the information that is gathered from riders as part of other survey efforts.

Operators also can be asked about their own personal opinions about the transit services being provided and any potential improvements that are necessary. Operators also are a good source of information about specific problems that may be occurring on certain routes that are service and/or safety related. It is important to keep the operator input as anonymous as possible to encourage their honest and open participation.

General Public/Non-User Survey

This type of survey is generally used to gather information from public workshop attendees and other willing public participants. During public events, typically paper or tablet-based surveys are offered as the medium to complete non-user surveys. Additionally, the same survey is often distributed electronically to event attendees, stakeholders, email lists, as well as posted on agency websites and social media accounts to ensure a diversity of non-user opinions.

The survey form should be clear, concise, and simple in order to be easily completed. There also should be space for those wishing to provide more extensive comments or suggestions. Questions on the survey can vary depending on the phase of public outreach (e.g., initial needs gathering or alternatives feedback collection). Typical questions also attempt to gauge the relative support for transit within the community, as well as a ranking of transit service attributes that are important to the respondent (i.e., ease of ticket purchases, friendliness of transit operators, safety of bus stops).

In summary, non-user surveys generate participation from members of the general public and can provide important information on the community's perceptions and attitudes toward public transportation, as well as determine why potential transit users are not using existing services. Non-users make up the largest potential source of new business. To attract them as transit users, the agency must be aware of their opinions regarding the existing transit service and public transit in general.

Employer/Employee Surveys

Interviews with major employers in the area can assist transit agencies in targeting and/or tailoring transit services that meet the needs of the employees of those businesses. Understanding the travel needs of the employees of large businesses also assists the transit agency in developing appropriate marketing and educational tools. An effective means of gathering information on these needs includes the conduct of interviews with employer representatives and administering a survey to employees.

In-person or phone interviews may be conducted with representatives, such as human resource managers, of the largest employers in the study area.

Typical questions often are related to issues such as commuting, parking, recruitment, marketing, and current usage of public transportation by employees. It is important to note that scheduling such interviews with business representatives often is a difficult and time-consuming process.

The individuals that should be interviewed to get the best information typically do not have much free time and may be skeptical about how discussing transit will help their company. Multiple contacts are often needed to secure a single interview and, often, a number of these individuals will choose not to participate at all.

As a concluding topic in the employer interview, asking the representative whether they are willing to distribute a brief survey to their employees is the best means of receiving direct access to employee opinions. Of course, if the employer interview cannot be scheduled, the transit agency can still request that an employee survey be distributed.

Transit Intercept Survey

A transit intercept survey is one of the least expensive survey applications for gathering information directly from transit riders. Surveys are generally distributed at major transfer stations to persons who are waiting for the bus or other transit modes. Alternatively, it is possible that brief personal interviews can be conducted with waiting transit patrons in lieu of using a questionnaire hand-out.

Typical aspects covered include questions on service quality and levels, rider attitudes, demographics, service satisfaction, trip purposes, transfer activity, and potential improvements to the current service.

Despite the low-cost advantage of the transit intercept survey, it may not cover a sufficient number of respondents to make the final results statistically valid due to the numeric and geographic limitation of its respondent base. Therefore, a transit intercept survey should be used to gather general information on a small scale, and then be taken together with other means of gathering input.

Mail-Out Survey

A mail-out survey is a traditional method for obtaining a relatively limited set of information from a large target population. Target populations may include specific geographic areas, non-riders, and transit-interested groups,

Appendix B

etc. If sampling is to be utilized, a random selection scheme should be used to ensure statistically-valid results. Surveys can be widely distributed and the cost of the survey can be kept low if included as part of the distribution of a utility bill or other mechanism. Mail-out surveys typically cover most of the same topics as other transit surveys, albeit on a smaller scale.

It also should be noted that the response rate for a mail-out survey is generally low (often 10% or less). Therefore, the number of surveys that needs to be distributed should be carefully determined to ensure that final results are statistically valid. It also is important to make the mail-out survey form as concise and user-friendly as possible to help encourage participation. To help improve response rate, return postage should be provided in advance via metering.

Household Telephone Survey

While not used as frequently due to cost and set-up logistics, the telephone-based household survey can be employed by transit agencies as a tool for gathering input primarily from non-riders. Similar to the on-board survey, this household survey can help the agency assess travel behavior and characteristics. The data obtained from a household telephone survey can be utilized to identify and program appropriate improvements that may better help meet the needs and demands of non-riders to help make transit a more attractive mode for them.

Random digit dialing telephone surveys provide another method to obtain a cross-section of the community's perceptions and familiarity with existing public transit services. Additionally, a random telephone survey can measure the levels of support for public transportation services, including approval of additional public resources for transit services.

APPENDIX

C

KEY RESOURCES

FDOT Information Hubs & Tools for
Florida Transit Agencies



FDOT

Public Transit Office

<http://www.fdot.gov/transit/default.shtm>



E-Updates | FL511 | Mobile | Site Map

Search FDOT...

Home About FDOT Contact Us Maps & Data Offices Performance Projects

Public Transit Office

Office Manager
Ed Coven
State Transit Manager

605 Suwannee Street
Mail Station 26
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Tel: 850-414-4500
Fax: 850-414-4508
E-Mail Us

Additional Contacts
[Staff Directory](#)



Office Resources

[About us](#)
[Meetings & Events](#)
[Grants and Commuter Assistance](#)
[Transit Operations and Safety](#)
[Transit Planning](#)
[Related Resources](#)
[Interactive Florida Transit Agency Map and Statistics](#)
[FLP Organization Guide](#)

Welcome

The mission of the FDOT Transit Office is to "identify, support, advance and manage cost effective, efficient and safe transportation systems and alternatives to maximize the passenger carrying capacity of surface transportation facilities." The FDOT Transit Office consists of three sections (Grants Administration; Transit Operations; Transit Planning) each of which has specific areas of responsibility.

News

2017 Florida Transit Information and Performance Handbook

Posted: Revised December 2017

This handbook provides a synopsis of Florida's transit agencies and systems data, and a snapshot of their performance in the 2016 reporting year.

Express Bus / Express Lane Systems Planning Guidelines

Posted: Revised December 2017

This document provides general guidance on the planning and design of the Express Bus service operating in Express Lanes and addresses major system components.

Plan For Transit

[Home](#)

[About](#)

[Resources](#)

[Transit Agencies](#)

[Professional Development](#)

[ListServ](#)

[Quick Links](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[No Access](#)

Search

type and hit enter...

Contact Details

605 Suwannee St., (MS 26),
Tallahassee, FL 32301

(850) 414-4803



About Us

The Florida Transit Planning Network is a partnership between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Florida transit agencies and the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida.

[Read More](#)

For more information on FDOT, please refer to:
[Transit Office Quick Reference Guide](#)

Resources

Download various transit planning documents including Transit Development Plans (TDPs), presentations, and our FTPN Newsletter

[Read More](#)

Transit Agencies

View the latest ridership and vehicle data from the 2009-2011 National Transit Database

[Read More](#)



Contact Us

For general program information about the FTPN, please contact: FDOT - [Gabe Matthews](#) (850) 414-4803, Planning Administrator, Transit Office.

Florida Transit
Planning Network

<https://planfortransit.com>

Key Resources—Information Hubs & Tools

FTIS

Florida Transit Information System

<http://www.ftis.org>



About FTIS

Florida Transit Information System (FTIS) is a suite of web-based systems developed for transit planning applications in Florida. The current version of FTIS includes the following four major systems:

- **Urban Integrated National Transit Database (Urban iNTD)**
A web-based system for the retrieval and analysis of multiple years of urban National Transit Database (NTD).
- **Rural Integrated National Transit Database (Rural iNTD)**
A web-based system for the retrieval and analysis of multiple years of rural National Transit Database (NTD).
- **Florida Transit Data Exchange (FTDE)**
A web-based system for the sharing of planning-related spatial data of the Florida fixed-route transit agencies. These include General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) and geographic information system (GIS) data.
- **Automated Transit Stop Inventory Model (ATSIM)**
A web-based mobile system for the collection, analysis, and maintenance of transit stop inventories.

Although these systems were developed originally for Florida applications, all except the FTDE system are equally applicable outside Florida. Along with the applications, web-based tutorials are available to allow users to explore the functions and benefits of the system.

If you have any questions about FTIS, please contact:

Chris A. Wiglesworth
Transit Planner
Florida Department of Transportation Transit Office
(850) 414-4532
chris.wiglesworth@fdot.state.fl.us



What's New?

- The 2016 NTD data have been added to Urban iNTD. (1/23/2016)
- The 2015 Urban NTD data are now in Urban iNTD. (12/21/2016)
- The 2014 NTD data have been added to Rural iNTD. (11/28/2016)
- Meet iNTD, our new name for INTDAS. (6/10/2016)
- FTGIS is now FTDE, the Florida Transit Data Exchange. FTDE provides a user-friendly platform for Florida urban fixed route transit agencies to share their spatial data, including GIS or GTFS files. (6/10/2016)



HOME FEATURES DOWNLOADS TRAINING FORUM CONTACT US

TBEST Transit Planning Software

DOWNLOAD TBEST 4.4

DOWNLOAD TBEST USER GUIDE

LAUNCH TRAINING VIDEOS



The Florida Department of Transportation Transit Office has been at the forefront in the development of state-of-the-art transit planning software tools. TBEST, or Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool, represents an effort to develop a multi-faceted GIS-based modeling, planning and analysis tool which integrates socio-economic, land use, and transit network data into a unique platform for scenario-based transit ridership estimation and analysis.



LOGIN TO ACCESS

SOFTWARE AND FORUMS

Username

Password

☒ Remember Me

TBEST Transit Planning Software

<https://tbest.org>

