

TDP Handbook

FDOT Guidance for Preparing & Reviewing Transit Development Plans

Version III, 2022 Update





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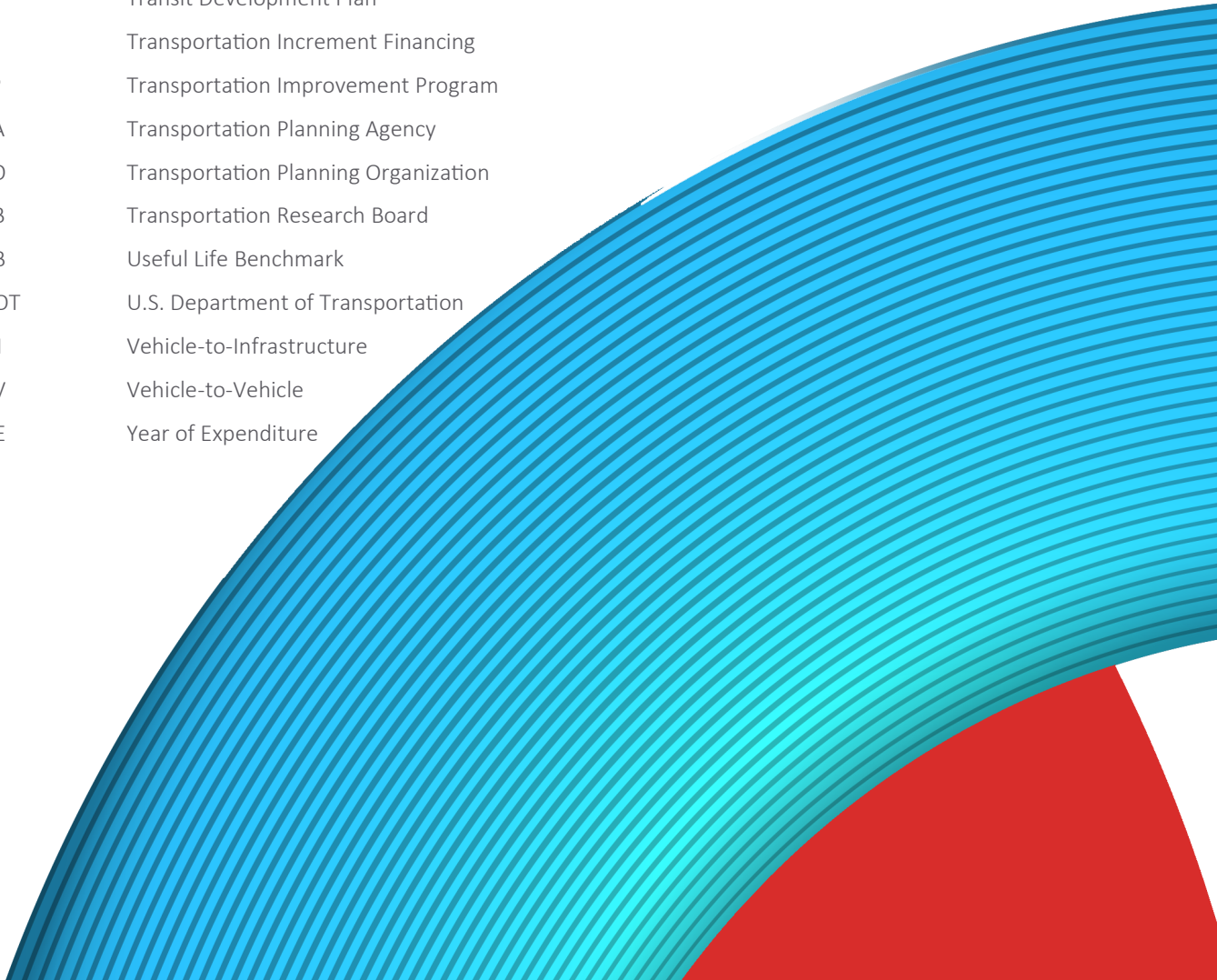
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Acronym Reference

ACS	American Community Survey
APC	Automatic Passenger Counter
APR	Annual Progress Report
APTA	American Public Transportation Association
ATCMTD	Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment
AV/CV	Automated Vehicle/Connected Vehicle
BEBR	Bureau of Economic and Business Research
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
BUILD	Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development
CBD	Central Business District
CMP	Congestion Management Process
COA	Comprehensive Operational Analysis
CTC	Community Transportation Coordinator
CTD	Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged
DSRC	Dedicated Short-Range Communications
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FAST	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FDOT	Florida Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FTIS	Florida Transit Information System
FTP	Florida Transportation Plan
FTPN	Florida Transit Planning Network
GIS	Geographic Information System
GOP	Goals, Objectives & Policies
GTFS	General Transit Feed Specification
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LOS	Level of Service

Acronym Reference

L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MOD	Mobility on Demand
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NTD	National Transit Database
PEA	Planning Emphasis Areas
PIP	Public Involvement Plan
PPP	Public Participation Plan
PRC	Project Review Committee
PTSAP	Public Transit Agency Safety Plans
RWB	Regional Workforce Board
SIS	Strategic Intermodal System
TAM	Transit Asset Management
TBEST	Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool
TCRP	Transit Cooperative Research Program
TD	Transportation Disadvantaged
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TDSP	Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan
TDP	Transit Development Plan
TIF	Transportation Increment Financing
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TPA	Transportation Planning Agency
TPO	Transportation Planning Organization
TRB	Transportation Research Board
ULB	Useful Life Benchmark
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
V2I	Vehicle-to-Infrastructure
V2V	Vehicle-to-Vehicle
YOE	Year of Expenditure



PART I

FDOT Guidance for Preparing Transit Development Plans



INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

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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 the TDP 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.

Purpose of this Update

This update to the 2018 TDP Handbook is focused on enhancing guidance for good transit planning practices and appropriately implementing newer requirements from legislative actions, funding programs, new or emerging technologies, and/or new approaches in transit services.

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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 rarely 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 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 (F.A.C.) 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 continue 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 at the same time that informed feedback on the mobility needs of the community is being received.

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 (MOD) solutions (e.g., Transportation Network Companies and microtransit), 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 every day, 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.

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



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, a transit agency can maximize the effort committed toward 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 the near future. Any effort expended by a transit agency to improve the perception of its services will be aided by these natural emerging trends.

In addition to capitalizing on trends, an agency can also refocus its efforts in balancing the key 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 & Preparer

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.

Throughout the State of Florida, major updates of TDPs and annual progress reports are prepared by various agencies. While a transit agency's governing board is required to adopt the TDP, preparation of the plans is managed or completed by transit agency staff, local planning agency staff, or staff from other agencies. Regardless of who completes it, the entity leading the TDP development process will encounter opportunities as well as challenges to complete the plan.

Opportunities include a broader system perspective with greater sensitivity to community needs and goals.

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.



Additionally, there may be broader buy-in and community support, possibly gaining real advocates outside the transit agency. The biggest challenge an entity may encounter is competing priorities from stakeholders causing conflicting goals or alternatives. When an entity other than the transit agency is leading the planning process to develop or update a TDP, the entity should coordinate with and demonstrate extraordinary support for the transit agency. Further related discussion and considerations are outlined in Chapter 3: Plan Development.

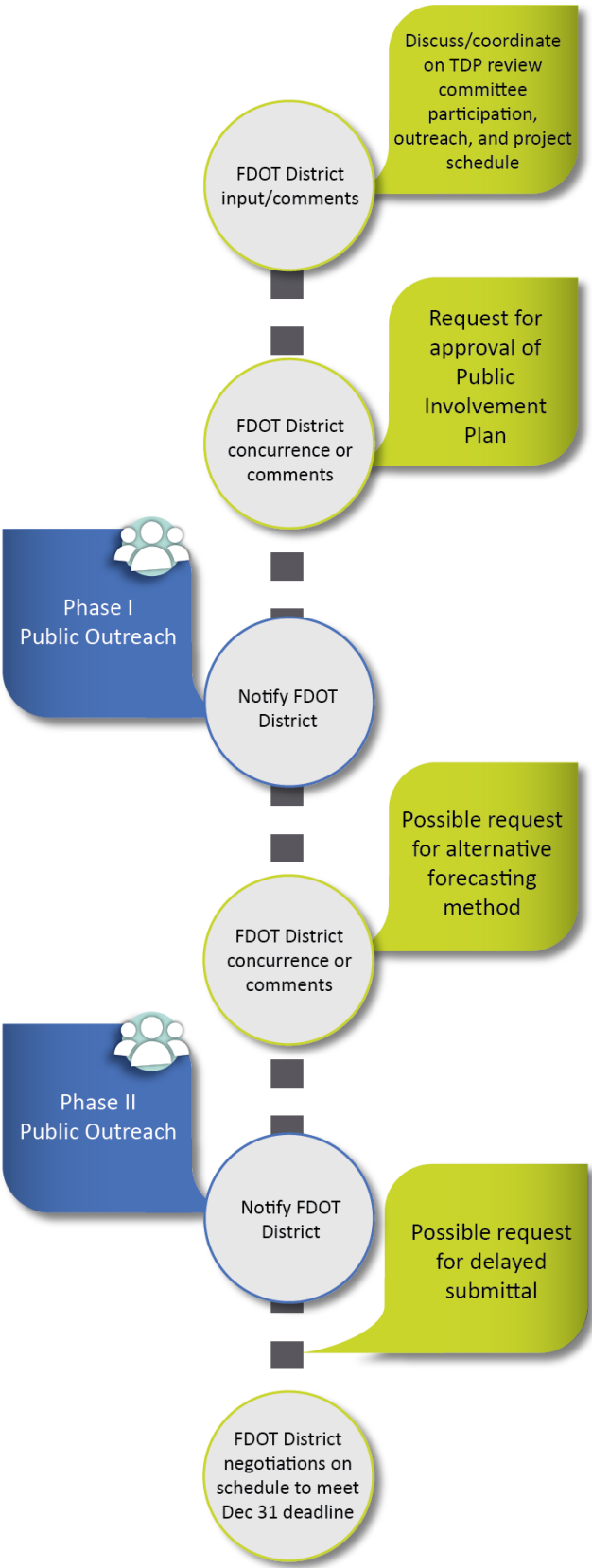
1.7 TDP Adoption

Once the TDP is complete, the TDP Rule requires that it be officially adopted by the transit 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.

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 for it to remain a living document and continue to make the case for transit within the community. As stated before, the level of awareness of public transit services is directly

Figure 1-1: Communication with FDOT



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 Coordinating 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

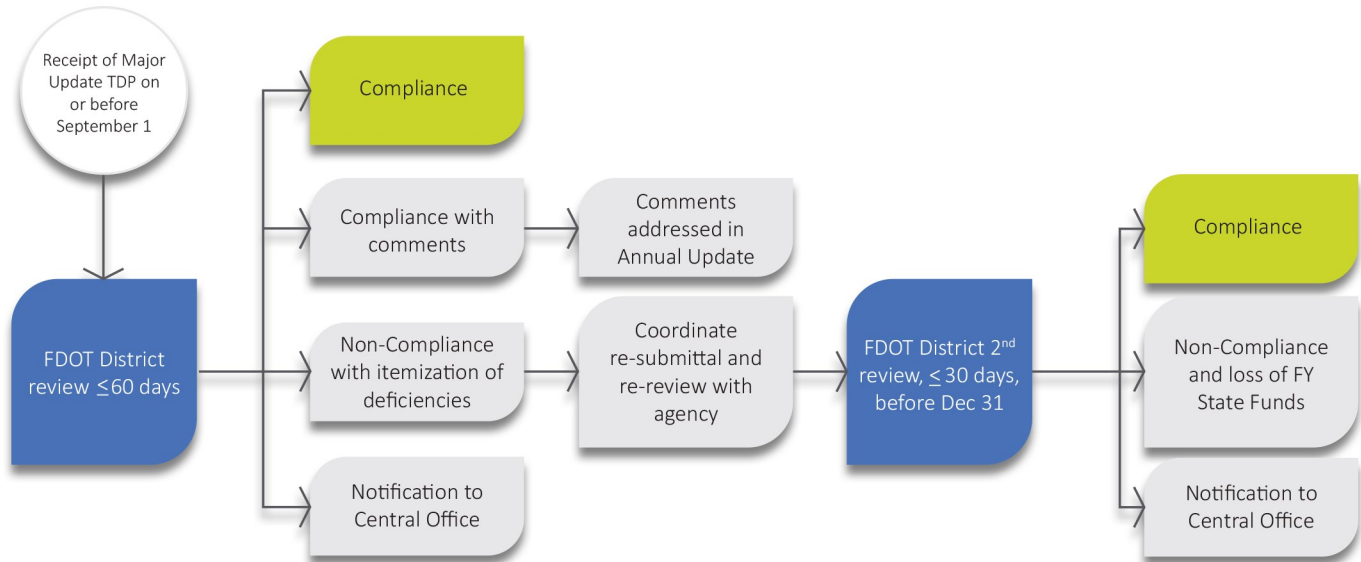
Prior to the official kick-off of the TDP, preliminary discussions with FDOT are encouraged and may cover topics such as the proposed project schedule, initial data needs, preliminary public outreach plan, and consideration of whether any steering or advisory committee for the TDP should include a representative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

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



- **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 major update or 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 is completed for compliance. Notices of non-compliance are copied to the FDOT Central Office, Transit Planning Administrator.
- **Re-Reviews** – If a TDP is found to be 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 31 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

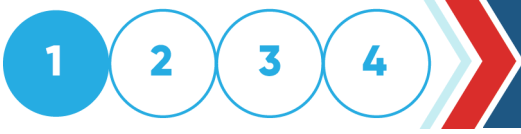
TDP may be conditional on a subsequent approval.

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 non-compliant; and December is FDOT’s second review period (re-review) for a corrected TDP or specific elements as appropriate. This schedule 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. Should any agency believe its schedule has been unduly delayed and it has reason to believe that it will not be able to comply with the required schedule, the agency is encouraged to contact its 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 Coordinating with the Local MPO

Metropolitan Planning Organizations, or MPOs (this includes Transportation Planning Organizations, or TPOs, and Transportation Planning Agencies, or TPAs, as well), should be and most often are key partners in the transit planning process. As the agency assigned by the Federal government to oversee the urban planning process, and as a political stakeholder locally with representation from municipalities and other jurisdictions, it is important for transit agencies to partner with them during the TDP development or update process. Further adding to the need to coordinate is the TDP Rule in F.A.C. 14-73.001, which requires a transit agency to include its local MPO in public involvement activities, establishment of goals, identification of needs, and the evaluation and/or prioritization of alternatives for inclusion in the TDP implementation plan. The remainder of this section will highlight these specific TDP phases and provide ideas and recommendations on best practices for coordination.

Another positive benefit of partnering with the MPO is the possibility of shared funding of the TDP, which would help transit agencies with constrained budgets. This may also give the MPO a bigger role in supporting the effort and a more vested interest in the planning process and the TDP results. If it is a funding partner, the MPO should benefit from more input on the overall planning process, especially in developing and prioritizing alternatives for the 10-year plan. Another positive benefit from this funding partnership would be increased assurance of the MPO's active participation, as required in F.A.C. 14-73.001, in the TDP's various public involvement activities. Active participation with MPOs in the TDP process can lead to holistic and collaborative planning efforts to develop integrated multimodal transportation systems that serve the needs of everyone.

At the Outset

Coordination with the MPO should begin well before the initiation of the TDP planning process. Especially in cases where the TDP is for a new transit system, it is likely that the MPO would be the initiating entity anyway, making the agency a key player in both the TDP development and the establishment of the new transit system. Many of the transit systems that have emerged over the past 20-25 years in Florida have been due to MPO efforts and foresight, making these agencies key partners from the onset of the transit systems. In other areas, MPOs have taken a key role in TDP major updates, and have a vested interest in transit succeeding and fulfilling the mobility needs outlined in their Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) or Congestion Management Processes (CMPs).

Regardless of the relationship between an MPO and transit agency, the MPO's expertise and local priorities make it a valuable participant in a TDP's Project Review Committee. In cases where the MPO provides all or a portion of the funding for plan development, then it clearly will be a key stakeholder and need to stay involved at a heightened level to manage and account for the investment appropriately. In Florida, it is typical for MPOs to provide all or a portion of the funding necessary to complete the TDP process. More about these partnerships is discussed in Section 3.9: Coordination and Implementation of Chapter 3: Plan Development, where best practices in partnering also are highlighted.

During Public Involvement

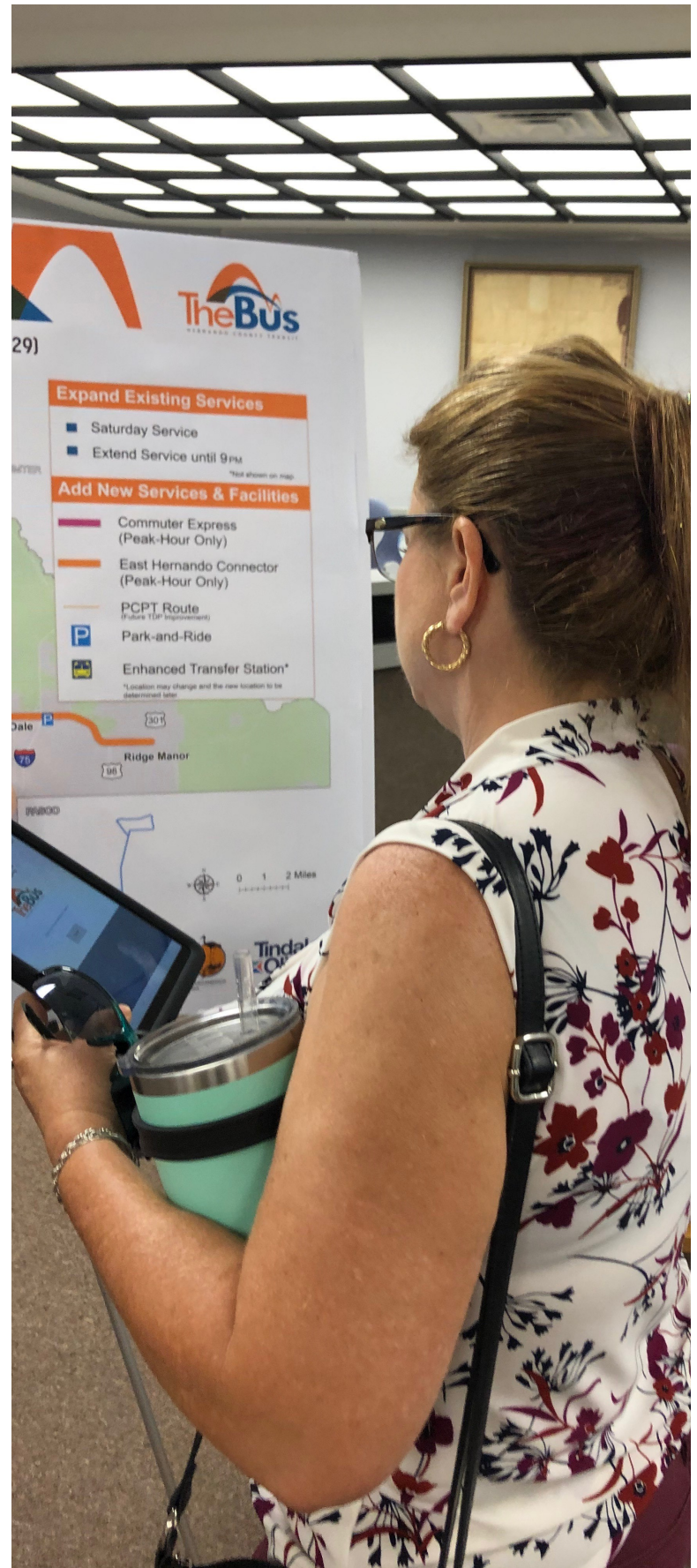
By nature and purpose, MPOs are required to be in the public information business. As such, they are governed by oversight in how well they plan and conduct their public engagement through their Public Participation Plans (PPPs) —the same plan that is allowed to be used for the TDP process, if desired. Transit agencies often use elements of the local MPO PPP and enhance them with specialized activities designed to improve their outreach to transit patrons, potential riders, and system stakeholders. By rule,

MPOs also play a role in the TDP public involvement process by participating on a Project Review Committee, taking part in stakeholder meetings, and/or attending discussion groups and public workshops.

MPOs have ongoing public involvement activities, as well as specialized engagement specific to their development of plans, including LRTPs, CMPs, and other metropolitan planning needs. Being sensitive to and somehow incorporating those engagement activities and the input they provide is wise for transit agencies to consider as they help gather a broader spectrum of input than just that collected during the outreach for TDP development. Additionally, planning joint activities for public input and engagement, if carefully coordinated, can save both the MPO and transit agency money and valuable staff time. Potential joint activities include piggybacking on standing or recurring events, adding key questions to surveys or discussion group questions, and using the same social media and/or web campaigns to notify and invite participation and garner feedback on mobility needs.

When Developing Transit Needs

A community's need for transit services is not always easily identifiable or well-defined due to a variety of reasons. Collecting and having good data that are sensitive to public demand and stakeholder priorities are key factors to identifying true mobility opportunities. MPOs typically take a broader and long term look at identifying community mobility needs and potential service





alternatives to help meet those needs during the development of their L RTPs. Transit agencies can benefit from this perspective by ideally setting up their TDP preparation timeline to have their transit needs plan developed in advance of their local L RTP multimodal needs plan development. Through this synergy, the TDP and L RTP could establish the true mobility needs for the community as a whole. The key is to have the TDP major update schedule be appropriately coordinated with the L RTP update schedule so that the shorter-range transit plan can feed into the longer-range multimodal plan. The resulting plan integration would facilitate a more complete, longer-range vision as well as a service mix that has been vetted with real operational parameters to ensure that alternatives are not only viable, but implementable.

When Updating TDP Goals

When conducting a TDP, the transit agency typically takes the lead role in updating existing or formulating new goals and objectives. But, it also should involve external partners, such as the local MPO, to the greatest extent possible. This collaboration offers the opportunity to positively impact an MPO's constituents—that is, the broader community—and, in turn, support the transit agency's overall vision and mission. Transit agency goals should consider not only the system's own aspirations, but reflect community goals for mobility, as well. By integrating the MPO transportation goals among its own, it will be easier for the transit agency to stoke and foster an internal desire to represent and serve its community's needs and development interests more fully, especially as they specifically relate to the community's overall transportation picture.

1.11 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 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.

1.12 Timing a Major Update

The current timing of TDP major update due dates was established almost by happenstance—going back to when local transit agencies submitted their first TDPs to FDOT. From these initial dates, then, the major updates became due every three (3) years, and then every five (5) years once the current TDP Rule went into effect on February 20, 2007. Some FDOT districts coordinated with the transit agencies within their jurisdictions to spread their TDPs out and stagger the due dates, while others tried to coordinate and have them submitted all the same year. Regardless of which year that TDP major update are now due, transit agencies desiring to better coordinate and schedule the completion of their TDP major updates in the year prior to or the same year as their local MPO's L RTPs should coordinate with their respective FDOT District Office. Basically, a transit agency may complete its TDP major update early, thereby moving it into the prior year or same year as its local MPO's L RTP is due. This might require its completion one or more years early, but there is no penalty for doing a TDP major update early. The requirements, however, do not allow transit agencies to do them more than five years apart.

1.13 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 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.

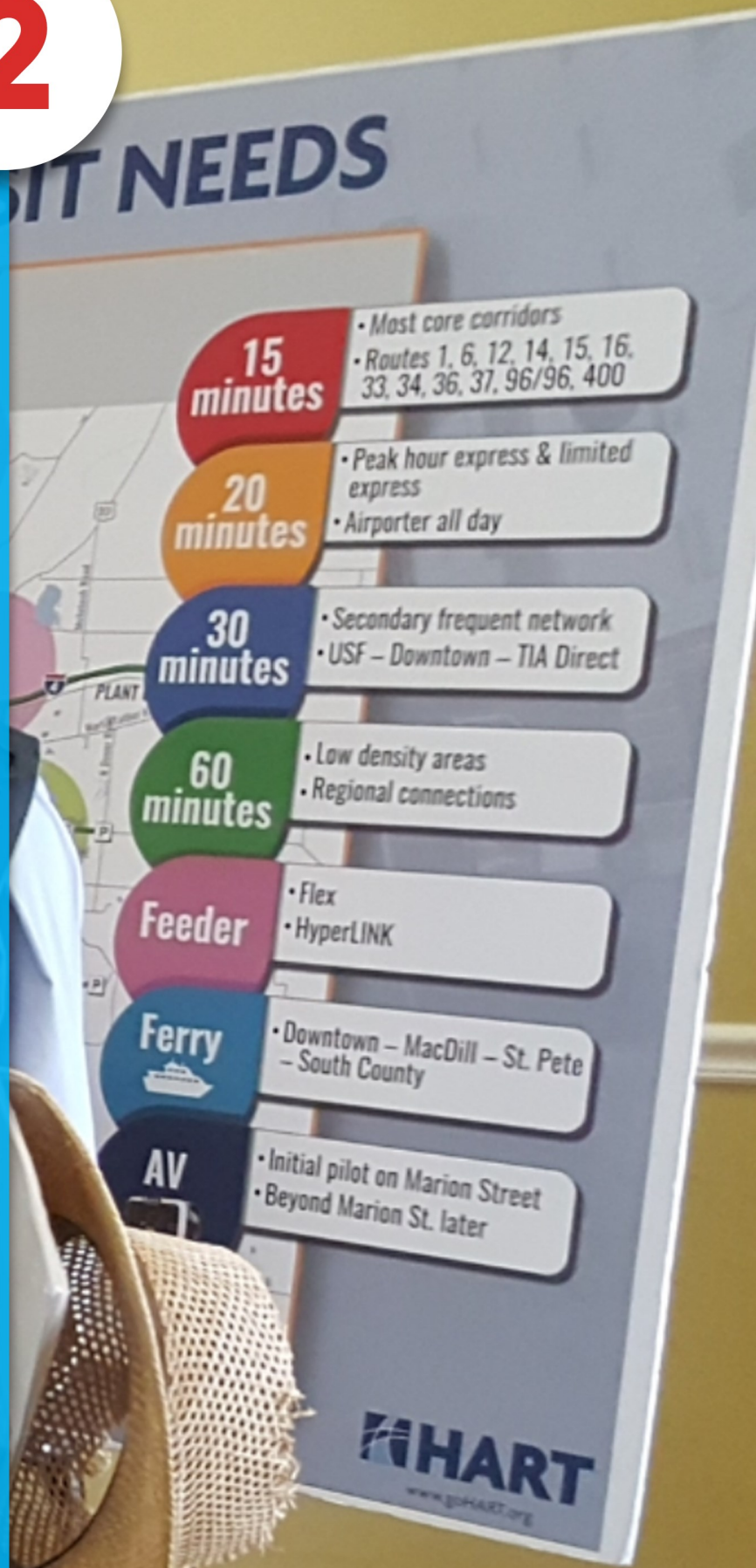
- First, it is important to remember that when receiving and using FTA funding, planning is an eligible expense under the capital definition allowing 80 percent Federal funding to be used. Additionally, the balance can be matched in several ways, including:
 - ◇ Toll Revenue Credits (making it actually 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 local 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 various transit agencies' 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

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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, a transit agency should define and express a vision for 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.



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The ultimate vision should be integral to, consistent with, 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. By its very nature, the TDP must focus on addressing 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 and desired role.

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

Transit Development Plan Process

preferences voiced by the eventual beneficiaries of such enhancements, 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 study 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 potential 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 simply a combined wish-list of projects.

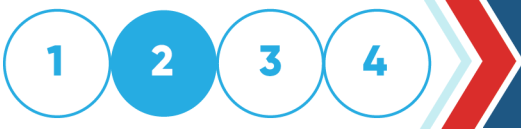
Many agencies have difficulty bridging their unconstrained needs lists with the financial plan element. FDOT has continued to emphasize in the TDP Rule that the TDP should include a list of recommended projects for which there are no identified funding sources. This list of unfunded projects is the means 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 federal 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 and when 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. The recommendations will logically feed the long range transportation planning process undertaken by the local MPO, as well.

A transit agency also should 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 Responding to New Opportunities & Priorities

With any set of challenges arises new opportunities for transit agencies to reinforce their commitment to providing their respective communities 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. Some of these, together with a closer look at current priorities set by FDOT as a key partner for Florida's transit agencies, are discussed here.

Federal & State Planning Emphasis Areas

The Vital Few were implemented by the FDOT Secretary and include the following: *Improve Safety, Enhance Mobility, Inspire Innovation, and Foster Talent*. These four core areas should be at the forefront of everything FDOT does as it continues to serve the residents and visitors of Florida. FDOT should always strive to improve safety for all road users, enhance mobility for a growing Florida, inspire innovation within the transportation industry, and foster talent within the agency by attracting the best and brightest employees in the nation. Please go to

<http://floridatransportationplan.com> for more information.

With the establishment of the new priorities and emphasis areas, FDOT has integrated them into the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) and the Department's new priority action plan process, the Vital Few Initiative. All of these areas are important for transit agencies, as well, and FDOT requires its funding recipients to address these areas in FDOT-funded activities and plans. Each of these areas bring opportunities to the TDP planning process, as well as the need for consideration on how agencies will integrate and accomplish meaningful results in support of these priorities.

The longest standing emphasis area for FDOT is **Safety**. Transit agencies also want to operate in a safe environment and manner, so the integration of safety and safety-related considerations into various components of the TDP is a natural result. Most elements of the TDP can include strategies and protocols for safety, including the existing service evaluation, public involvement, system goals and objectives, needs assessment, alternatives evaluation, and performance measures.

Transit systems also should identify emerging areas of **Innovation** in transit and encourage policies and strategies that inspire innovation throughout the TDP process. Planned service and capital improvements that deploy new and emerging technologies for transit systems should be fostered. These include such items as phone applications and NextBus announcement systems, route and bus scheduling software, onboard vehicle locators and passenger counters, and automated sensors for vehicle performance or breakdowns. Additionally, the use of technological innovations/enhancements in TDP development, such as social media, web-based surveys, and computer tablets, also could be considered for potential use in public involvement activities and/or data collection and analysis during the planning process.

The most logical of the emphasis areas to be integrated into the TDP and its related planning process is **Mobility**.

Transit Development Plan Process

The very nature of transit is to promote connectivity strategies for enhancing mobility, such as attracting discretionary ridership, supporting premium transit, and improving technology-based first/last mile services. Additionally, transit agencies should thrive in coordinated planning activities focused on mobility needs and options, especially in conjunction with MPO planning for LRTPs, CMPs, and transportation demand management strategies. Finally, in terms of **Talent**, all transportation agencies should be concerned with hiring and retaining excellent staff, especially given the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on staffing levels, particularly operators. In the TDP review of organizational abilities and needs, it is possible to review salary levels, employee roles, and/or functions to help identify needs and develop strategies for recruiting, training, and retaining operators, mechanics, and other essential staff.

FDOT Priorities & Emphasis Areas

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and its agencies (FHWA and FTA, specifically), have established and required states and MPOs to include Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs) in their planning processes, as part of receiving federal planning funding. These PEAs have often focused on the metropolitan planning areas or process, and/or connecting rural areas to services in urban areas. The earliest PEAs were specifically intended to influence MPO plans and foster consistency on key transportation issues. Over time, PEAs were made priority for other agencies and plans, as well, including requisite impacts for TDPs and state funding for transit operations. The most recent federal PEAs were published on December 30, 2021, with the 2021 PEAs including: Tackling the Climate Crises-Transition to a Clean Energy, Resilient Future; Equity and Justice⁴⁰ in Transportation Planning; Complete Streets; Public Involvement; Strategic Highway Network/US Department of Defense Coordination; Federal Land Management Agency Coordination; Planning and Environmental Linkages; and, Data in Transportation Planning.

Plan Outreach Early



TDP Tips

Planning for TDP public outreach should start at the early stages of the TDP process to ensure a timely implementation of the activities and to 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

FDOT has also established State PEAs for many years, with these highlighted and integrated into the FTP and other modal plans and policies. The FDOT Office of Policy Planning develops the PEAs on a two-year cycle in coordination with the development of MPOs' respective unified planning work programs. PEAs set planning priorities, support the FTP, and give importance to state topic areas that MPOs are encouraged to address as they develop their planning programs. Implementation of the seven goals of the FTP requires embracing innovation; extensive collaboration across jurisdictions, modes, and disciplines; an emphasis on customer service; data and performance feedback; and strategic investments for the efficient and effective allocation of resources. The 2020 Emphasis Areas include: Safety, System Connectivity, Resilience, and ACES (Automated/Connected/Electric/Shared-Use) Vehicles.

Mobility on Demand

MOD uses technology-based innovation and user-focused approaches to provide transit services by combining local transit agency services with transit-related options from private mobility companies. The growth in partnerships between transit agencies and various private MOD software and service providers has continued in the last decade to provide first mile/last mile connections, fill gaps in service spans or coverage in the periphery, or simply to use software tools/applications to improve overall convenience for travelers. With an increasing number of transit agencies and cities forming partnerships to purchase software platforms or service, the concept of MOD is a key tool for all Florida transit agencies to consider as a potential opportunity to better serve their communities.

Social Media Outreach

New platforms and online tools have continued to emerge in the last decade, opening up communication channels to reach prior and new public audiences. Social media has helped lower many barriers to communication and, as a result, reduced the cost of outreach. However, any online outreach should still be strategically coordinated with a broader campaign to help maximize awareness and engagement. As always, equity and accessibility to the platforms also should be considered for all online outreach. While some of these online ecosystems are well

Connected Vehicle Technology in Transit

Tampa-Hillsborough Express Authority (THEA)

In Tampa, Florida, the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority (THEA) is working with FDOT, City of Tampa, and Hillsborough Transit Authority (HART) on an AV/CV pilot to deploy a variety of V2V and V2I applications to relieve congestion, reduce collisions, and prevent wrong-way entry on its reversible lanes. THEA also is using AV/CV technology to enhance pedestrian safety and speed bus operations. The THEA AV/CV Pilot employs DSRC to enable transmissions among approximately 1,000 cars, 10 buses, 8 trolleys, and approximately 47 roadside units along city streets.



Source: its.dot.gov

established now and others still evolving, transit agencies are still in the process of refining their best practices for engaging their customers. Legal hurdles and/or lack of quick access to these platforms (if the transit agency does not maintain them) have sometimes hindered using them in a productive manner. However, these platforms still remain as an opportunity for a low-cost and effective tool, with lots of potential for TDP development.



Case Study

Connected & Autonomous Vehicles

Automated Vehicle/Connected Vehicle (AV/CV) applications for transit are emerging and are already being tested to provide connectivity between and among transit vehicles, infrastructure, and wireless devices, thereby enabling safety, mobility, and environmental benefits for transit. The outcomes of using connected vehicle applications are also consistent with FDOT's priorities of enhancing safety, improving mobility, and inspiring innovation. Connected vehicle technology may also help reduce transit crashes and make transit trips faster and more accessible.

Based on information from USDOT's Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office, research on transit AV/CV technology use is still ongoing, including assessments of ongoing AV/CV pilots. Some of the vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) safety applications allow a bus operator to receive an alert to the presence of a pedestrian near or in a crosswalk as the operator makes a right or left turn at a signalized intersection. Similarly, vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) applications can help a bus operator receive an alert for a vehicle making a right turn in front of the bus as the bus driver pulls away from a bus stop.

While AV/CV technology continues to make progress, autonomous buses appear to remain a longer-term technology application for most Florida transit agencies. Nevertheless, while autonomous vehicles may not be widely adopted by consumers for a few decades yet, autonomous bus services and fleets may be closer on the horizon than expected. 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 capturing public attention, which can help improve overall awareness of transit within a TDP's study area, especially among non-users.

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 to address identified needs.

Required Components of TDP Major Update

The recommended 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.

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



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.



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.



Transit Development Plan Process



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 public 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 and any potential barriers that may impact addressing them. However, increasingly, the need to address local land use policies, urban design practices, development patterns, and technologies at the disposal of transit agencies (e.g., Intelligent Transportation Systems [ITS], mobile apps, blogs, virtual communities) are becoming a crucial part of the required appraisal effort, as well.

TDP Goals & Objectives

The transit agency’s vision, goals, and objectives should be adapted in response to the local 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.

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	4 & Appendix D
✓ PIP approved by FDOT	4 & Appendix D
✓ TDP includes description of Public Involvement Process	4
✓ Provide notification to FDOT	4 & Appendix D
✓ Provide notification to Regional Workforce Board	4
Situation Appraisal	
✓ Land use	5
✓ State and local transportation plans	5
✓ Other governmental actions and policies	5
✓ Socioeconomic trends	5
✓ Organizational issues	5
✓ Technology	5
✓ 10-year annual projections of transit ridership using approved model TBEST	7
✓ Assessment of land uses and urban design patterns that support/hinder transit service provision	5
✓ Calculate farebox recovery	3 & Appendix C

Transit Development Plan Process

Table 2-1: Compliance with TDP Rule Requirements

Recommended 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 Coordination and Implementation	Section 3 (f)	Chapter 3.9
Annual Progress Report	Section 4	Chapter 4

Transit Demand Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to estimate current and potential future ridership demand using an FDOT-approved estimation tool so that this information can be used subsequently in the evaluation of alternative transit service scenarios.

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 prioritization 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 and/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 “preferred” 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.

Consistency with FDOT Priorities

It is paramount that transit agencies are aware of and respond to FDOT priorities as well as any emphasis areas to guide the development of their respective transit systems and support regional and state mobility goals and needs. A TDP provides a beneficial opportunity to a transit agency every five years to showcase to FDOT that it is consistent with those priorities and is also a willing partner for advancing FDOT’s efforts to reach its goals in safety, mobility, and innovation.

It is important to recognize that FDOT priorities may change from time to time and its focus may widen to address additional challenges and opportunities that may come up on state, national, and global scales. Therefore, transit agencies should use the TDP process as another opportunity to review the most recent FTP, as well as to consult with their District staff to stay informed on any new or revised priorities and goals for FDOT.



3

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

WHAT'S NEW?

New and Updated Guidance on All Components of TDP Development, Including:

- Baseline Conditions Assessment..... 25
- Existing Services & Performance Evaluation 35
- Public Involvement 45
- Situation Appraisal..... 58
- Goals & Objectives..... 67
- Transit Demand Assessment.....73
- 10-Year Transit Plan 89
- Plan Coordination & Implementation 101

New Case Studies, Best Practice Examples, TDP Tips, and Updated Data Resources





3.1 Baseline Conditions Assessment

New in this Section:

- *Importance of MPO coordination on data gathering*
- *Focus on affordable housing data and its role in TDPs*
- *First mile/last mile connectivity and MOD data*
- *Best practice examples, TDP tips, and data resources*

3.1 Baseline Conditions

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Objectives	25
Gathering Baseline Data	26
Elements of Baseline Data Assessment	27
Demographic/Socioeconomic Characteristics ...	27
Land Use/Growth Characteristics	30
Travel/Mobility Characteristics	32
Data Analysis & Presentation	34

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, and based on the discussion of “where we are, where we want to be, and how we can 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 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 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.

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

Baseline Conditions	Required*	Preferred
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 types of data points assessed may vary, but, in general, TDPs must, at a minimum, review demographic, socioeconomic, and land use data.

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 and analysis of baseline data should 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 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.

As the TDP Rule emphasizes the need for coordination between a transit agency and the local MPO, it is important to involve the MPO along the way, especially during project initiation. 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. Ideally, the TDP and the LRTP are intertwined documents and the TDP supports the LRTP. Additionally, the TDP can become a useful reference document for the MPO’s next update of the LRTP and help inform efforts related to the MPO’s Transportation Improvement Program, 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., outlying 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.



Case Study

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.



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 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



Make Use of Available Data

A large number of reliable and well-organized data sources are now available online for all levels of geography, in addition to the most commonly used sources, like Census or ACS. This also allows for agencies to easily incorporate areas such as affordable housing, public health, or tourism into their baseline data analyses. For example, data for affordable housing may come from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse, or even a local study recently conducted by a different city/county agency.

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. Population segments in communities that qualify for affordable housing may also need access to more affordable travel options such as transit. The identification of these locations would help when prioritizing locations for new service or to expand current services.

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 who 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 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 during those periods, 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. For example, 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

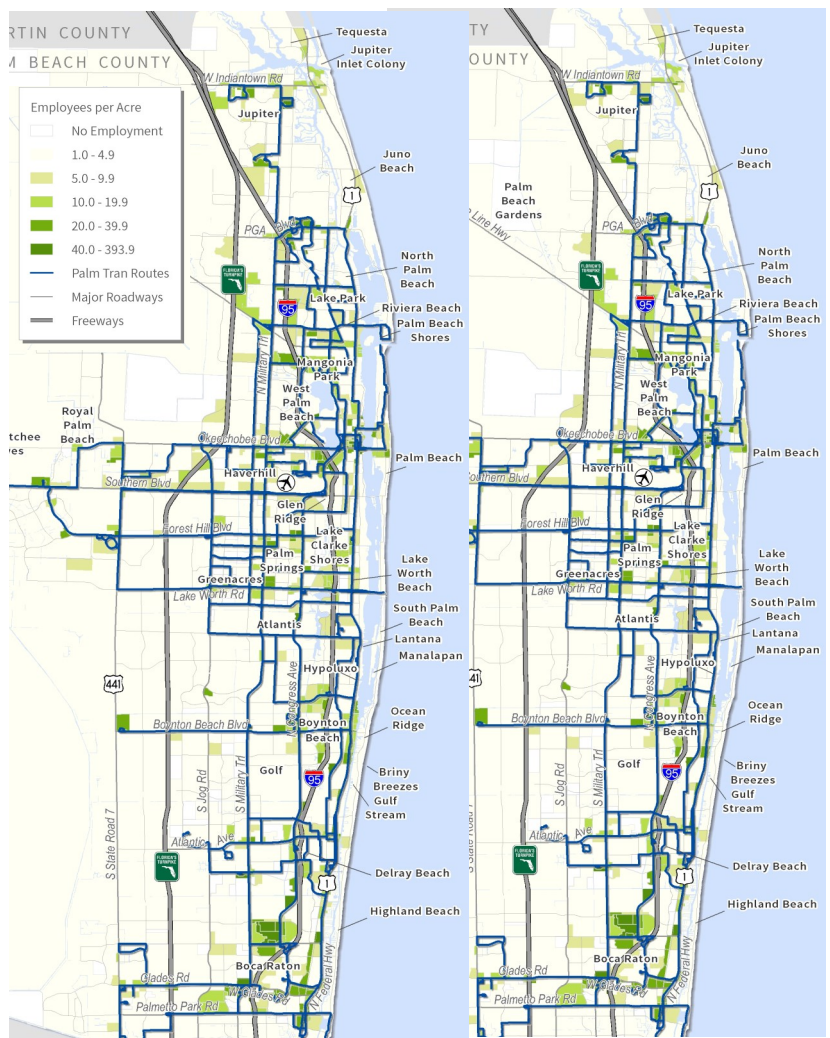
A helpful way of presenting this information is to show current densities alongside the TDP horizon year, as shown here for employment data. Providing a visual representation of progression in population or employment can help identify areas that are growing and may deserve more emphasis when evaluating potential transit services.

attention in planning transit service. Additionally, shifts in employment densities also should be reviewed, as shown in Figure 3-1, below.

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.

Figure 3-1: Current (left) and Horizon Year (right) Employment Densities



Source: PalmTran TDP, 2021

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, tend to have a greater reliance on public transit. Such areas may be characterized as transit dependent and generally have high potential for transit use. Conversely, higher income areas, unless they are retirement communities, may indicate lower potential for transit success.

Vehicle Availability

Individuals with low vehicle availability also have a greater tendency to utilize public transit. Hence, areas exhibiting a low incidence of vehicle ownership also can be characterized as being comparably transit dependent, especially in cases where the number of licensed drivers in a household exceeds the number of functioning vehicles available 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 identically correspondent to low-income areas, low-income and zero-vehicle areas may likely have considerable overlap.

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 are 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.

Unemployment Rate

Additionally, a transit agency may consider including information on the unemployment rate within the study area, to provide additional information concerning employment patterns.

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.



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

Figure 3-2: Employment Centers



Identifying employment centers alongside the existing transit network can enable transit agencies to identify gaps in the network and potential opportunities to prioritize employers with which to develop partnerships.

Source: Key West TDP, 2019

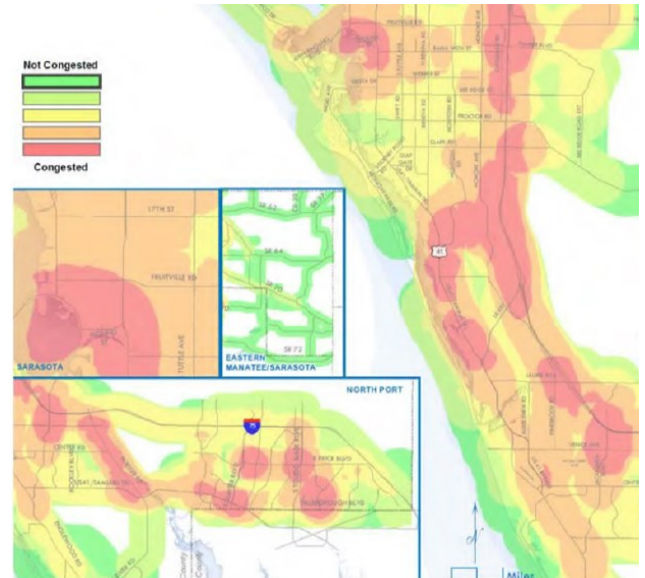
present potential challenges, opportunities, and areas for partnership for transit agencies that can be addressed in the TDP.

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

Figure 3-3 Future Congestion



In addition to identifying major employers, reviewing corridors with traffic congestion can also be helpful. Identifying corridor segments and hot spots for congestion can help recommend transit preferential treatments when considering premium or enhanced transit services.

Source: SCAT TDP, 2020

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.

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 homes 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 3-2 provides an example of how major employers 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.

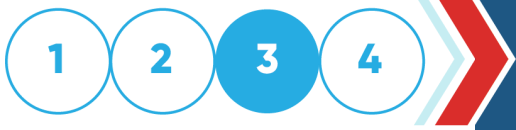
Travel time to work provides information on how long it takes workers to get to their jobs. Information regarding place-to-place work commutes within a metropolitan area may also be available for the study area. These data can provide insight for inter-county travel patterns, which may support mobility 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. Figure 3-3 provides an example of mapping that highlights congestion to determine service areas that may need additional services.

Connectivity Between Major Hubs

System connectivity 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 study area centers of activity, 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

A 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 to no density. This makes it challenging to provide effective and efficient transit services to all of these dispersed locations.

As an innovative way to respond to these challenges, some transit agencies are partnering with private companies that provide on-demand mobility to address this service gap. These MOD services, ranging from ride-sharing to ride-hailing, have continued to grow in popularity, especially among young adults. Additionally, in many locations, they naturally grew to complement spatial or temporal gaps in transit services before partnerships were considered an option. Now, transit agencies are also using these

FTA Resources

FTA's "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.



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 are sometimes severely underutilized, as evidenced by typical low ridership levels after peak hour evening travel.

Using MOD Data

With the introduction of new private mobility services and software providers comes the collection and availability of new data on travel patterns. Transit agencies and cities/counties are working with these providers to enrich available mobility data and TDPs can benefit from using these data, where available.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Networks

Transit passengers are typically pedestrians on both ends of their transit trip. Therefore, the study area's pedestrian 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, to extending the effective reach of the network for them, 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.

3.2 Existing Services & Performance Evaluation

New in this Section:

- *Performance on Safety & State of Good Repair*
- *Additional New Performance Measures for Trend and Peer Analyses, Safety, State of Good Repair, and Service Reliability and Accessibility*
- *New Best Practice Examples, TDP Tips*



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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 potential service alternatives. Equipped with results from the evaluation and informed outreach feedback, it is then possible for a transit agency to formulate logical goals, objectives, and strategies for its TDP that are best designed to enhance and track service performance in the future.

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 the 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.

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 toward

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

Service Performance Evaluation	Required*	Preferred
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.

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 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;

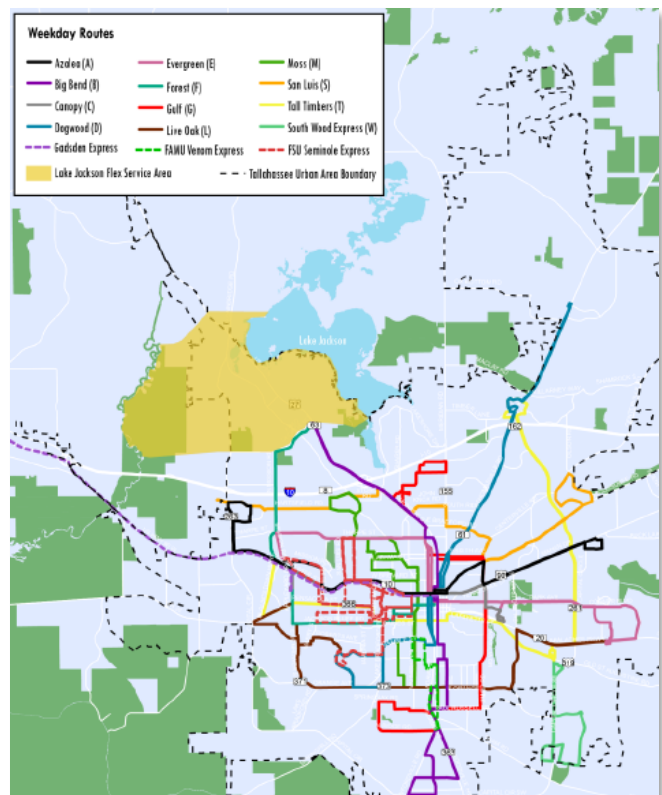
- The current institutional arrangements describing who oversees and manages the transit services (i.e., city department, county department, independent transportation authority, management firm, etc.); and
- A description of the types of services currently provided by the agency, including both fixed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

Fixed-Route Transit Service Profile

The fixed-route profile provides a more detailed summary and depiction, 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, heavy rail, and light rail, among other modes;

Figure 3-4: Service Area Map with Route Overlay



Source: StartMetro TDP/City of Tallahassee, 2016

- 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.

Figures 3-5 and 3-6 provide example 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



Case Study

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.

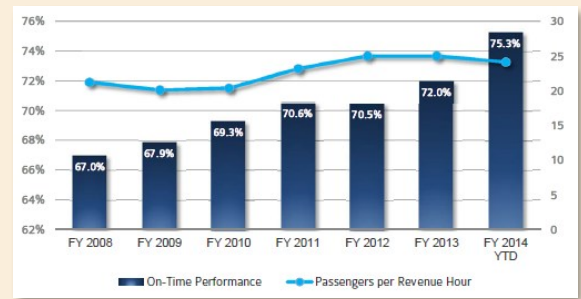


Figure 3-5: Service Characteristics by Route

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	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min
8	Progress Village/ Brandon	Weekday 30 min Weekend 50-70 min	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	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min
10	Cypress Street	Weekday 60 min	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	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	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	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	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	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	Weekday 30 min Weekend 60 min

Note: Peak headways are defined as:

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									
		505,893	233,995	16,518	2.16	3	30.63	1	145.6%
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									
		6,302	9,787	452	0.64	1	13.94	7	11.8%
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									
		13,694	45,464	1,658	0.3	1	5.15	14	-58.7%
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	-	-
Totals⁴		1,494,636	1,355,051	91,749	-	24	-	-	-

Source: Manatee County TDP, 2018

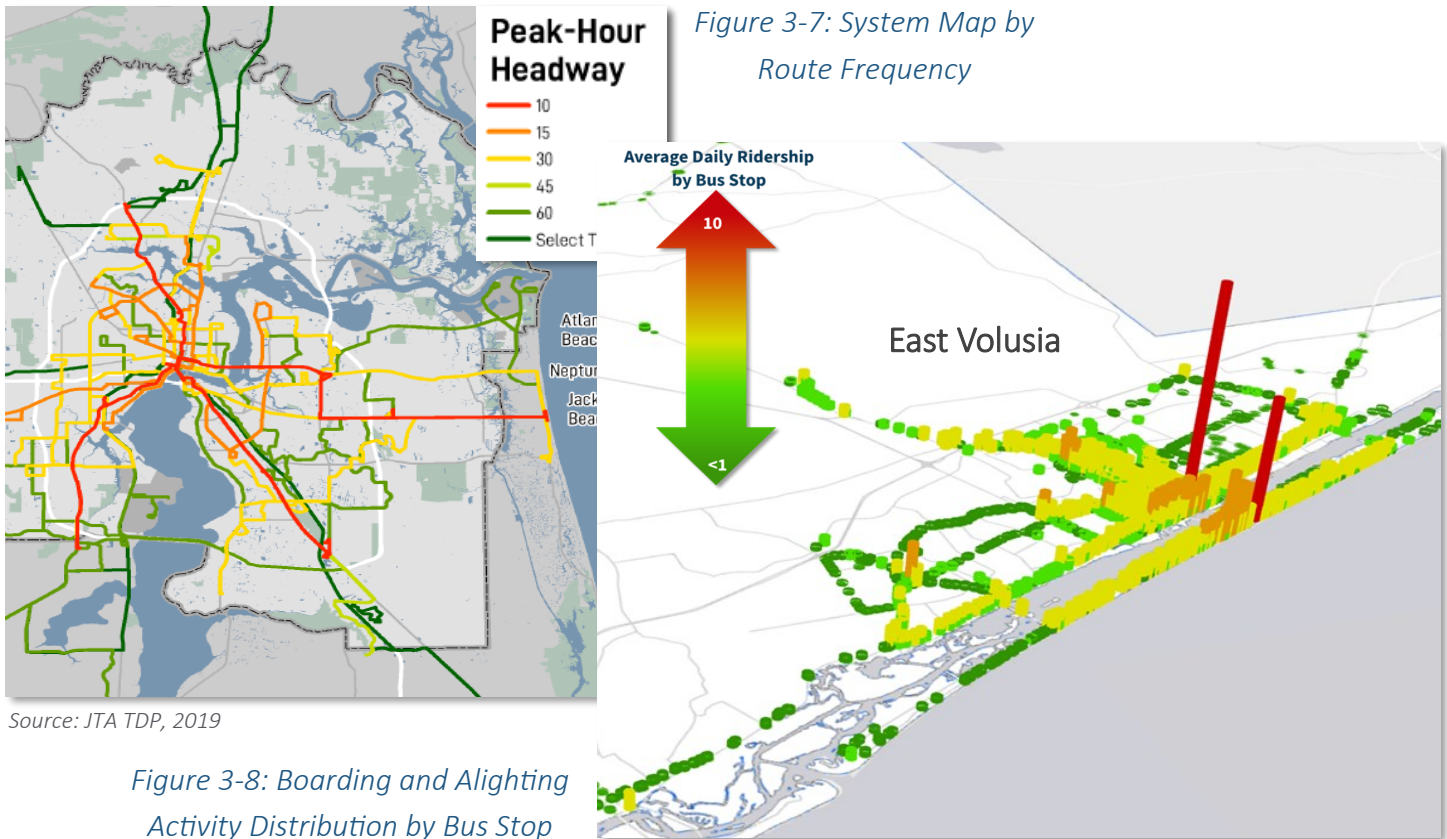


Figure 3-7: System Map by Route Frequency

Source: JTA TDP, 2019

Figure 3-8: Boarding and Alighting Activity Distribution by Bus Stop

Source: Votran TDP, 2021

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.

ADA Paratransit Service Profile

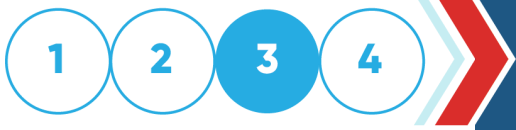
In addition to fixed-route services, the TDP should include an overview of the FTA-required complementary ADA paratransit service, whether it is directly operated by the

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. As agencies are developing or updating their TAM plans, 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., van

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 (COAs) every few years, which are necessary for a more in-depth look into potential efficiency adjustments.

pools), 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.

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 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

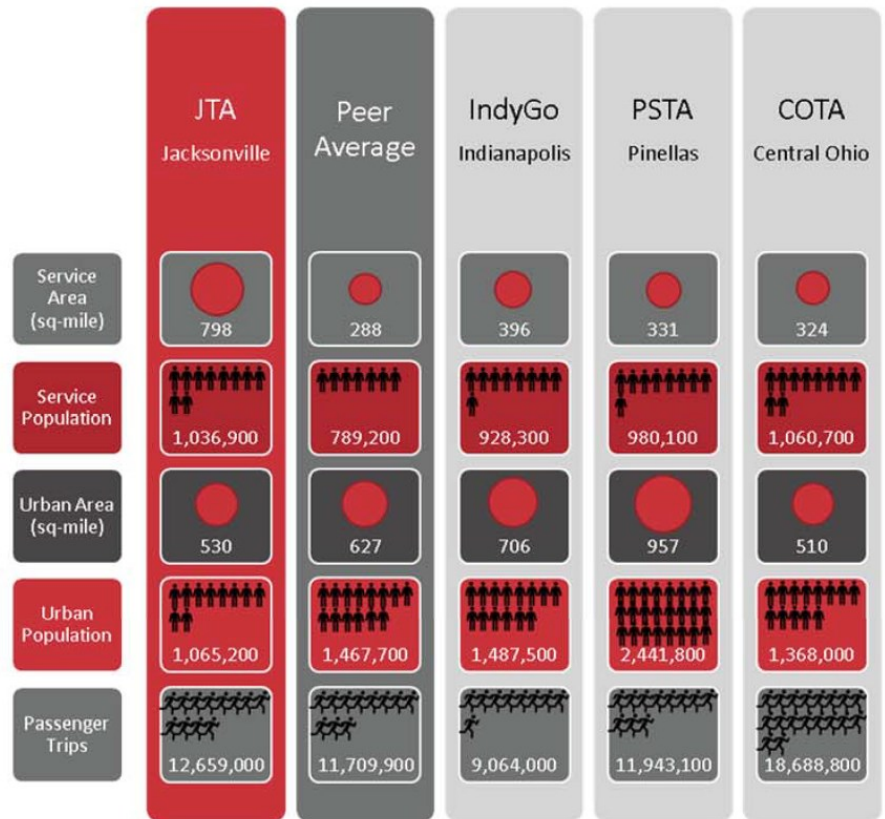
A peer group analysis compares a transit system's performance with that of similar transit systems. Characteristics of the transit system can be compared with similar systems in Florida and nationally. Selecting peer

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 available draft or un-validated performance data that will later be submitted to FTA for NTD purposes in order to include more recent data in the TDP. Other sources may include federally-required Public Transit Agency Safety Plans (PTASPs) and Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plans, which are regularly developed by transit agencies.

Figure 3-9: Peer Review Analysis Overview



Sources: JTA TDP, 2018

systems is discussed later, but they 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

Table 3-3: Transit 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	Passenger Trips Per Revenue Hour	Maintenance Expense Per Revenue Mile
Operating Employee FTEs	Passenger Trips Per Revenue Mile	Operating Expense Per Passenger Mile
Passenger Fare Revenues	Passenger Trips Per Service Area Capita	Operating Expense Per Passenger Trip
Passenger Miles	Revenue Miles Per Route Mile	Operating Expense Per Peak Vehicle
Passenger Trips	Route Miles Per Square Mile of Service Area	Operating Expense Per Revenue Hour
Revenue Hours	Revenue Miles Per Service Area Capita	Operating Expense Per Revenue Mile
Revenue Miles	System-wide On-time Performance	Operating Expense Per Service Area Capita
Route Miles	Fatalities per 100K Revenue Miles	Operating Revenue Per Operating Expense (%)
Service Area Population	Failures per 100K Revenue Miles	Passenger Trips Per Employee FTE
Service Area Population Density	Safety Events per 100K Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours Per Employee FTE
Service Area Size (square miles)	% of Rev. Vehicles Met or Exceeded Their ULB	Revenue Hours Per Total Vehicles
Spare Ratio (%)	% of Non-rev. Veh. Met or Exceeded their ULB	Revenue Miles Per Total Vehicles
Weekday Span of Service (in hours)	% of Facilities Rated Below 3 on FTA TERM Scale	Revenue Miles Per Vehicle Mile
Total Capital Expense	<p><i>The trend analysis and peer review analysis should be tailored to each transit agency; however, the bolded measures are considered worthwhile and recommended for inclusion in the TDP.</i></p>	Vehicle Hours Per Peak Vehicle
Total Employee FTEs		Vehicle Miles Per Gallon
Total Energy Consumed (KW-Hours)		Vehicle Miles Per Kilowatt-Hour
Total Gallons Consumed		Vehicle Miles Per Peak Vehicle
State Contribution		
Total Local Revenue		
Total Maintenance Expense		
Total Operating Expense		
Vehicle Hours		
Vehicle Miles		
Vehicles Available for Max. Service		
Vehicles Operated in Max. Service		



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.





Case Study

the service area. Figure 3-9, shown previously, shows an example of the measures and criteria that can be used to support comparisons with selected peers.

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.

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.

Performance on Safety & State of Good Repair

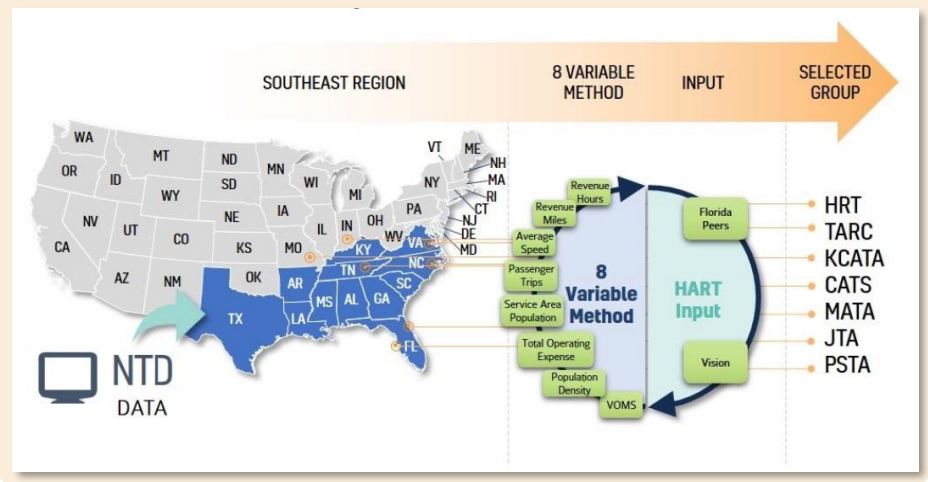
As a best practice, TDP trend analyses and peer reviews can also be extended to report and assess how the agency is doing on safety and asset management. Using performance measures that are used in PTASPs and TAM plans, TDPs can show the transit agency's progress toward meeting current federal safety and State of Good Repair targets. The following measures are recommended for reporting and analyzing under the scope of TDP trend and peer review analyses:

- Transit Safety: Fatalities per 100K revenue miles, Failures per 100K revenue miles, and Safety events per 100K revenue miles

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 created a graphic designed to depict the peer



- Transit Asset Management: Percentage of revenue vehicles that have met or exceeded their Useful Life Benchmark (ULB), Percentage of non-revenue vehicles that have met or exceeded their ULB, and Percentage of facilities rated below 3 on FTA TERM scale

Transit agencies should use NTD and/or their PTASPs and TAM plans to clearly define and report these data as part of the trend and peer analyses discussed previously. Additionally, it is also recommended that transit agencies show these measures alongside the agency's annual safety and State of Good Repair targets, as well. This can be included separately, preferably as an appendix to the TDP, providing context to the data reported in these areas.

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 upon 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 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.

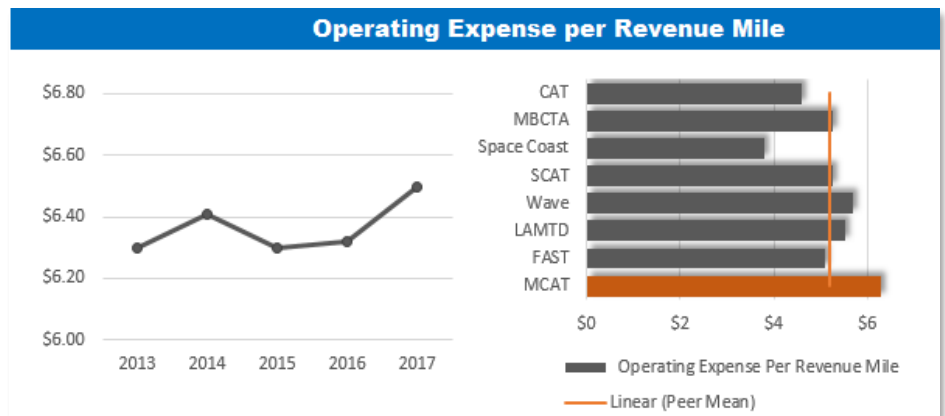
Presenting the Findings

A sample figure for a performance measure analysis, in this case operating expense per revenue mile, is shown in Figure 3-10. 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,

Figure 3-10: Trend/Peer Side-by-Side Overview



Source: Manatee County TDP, 2018

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.

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



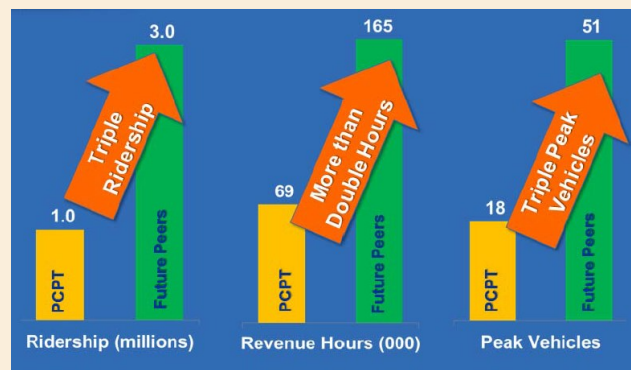
Case Study

Future Peers 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, like in an area with rapid population growth.

This was the case for Pasco County Public Transportation (PCPT, now branded as GoPasco) and, unlike other transit agencies in Florida, the area faces a drastically different operating environment in the future. Therefore, GoPasco conducted a second peer analysis intended to identify peer agencies that would be similar to GoPasco 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.



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.

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 Peers 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:

- 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



3.3 Public Involvement

New in this Section:

- *Key Elements of a PIP and Setting Outreach Schedule/ Timeline, Recommended PIP Submittal Timeline*
- *Project Review Committees and Membership*
- *TDP Rule Requirements on PIPs Vs. What Should be Included to Meet Them*
- *Weigh Virtual Vs. In-Person Options*
- *Updated TDP Public Involvement Toolbox and Appendix, New Matrix of Informational Techniques*
- *Using MPO Public Participation Plan instead of a PIP*

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TDP Public Involvement Toolbox 54

MPO PPP Vs. TDP-Specific PIP 54

planning efforts. For example, transportation legislation, such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIB), 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 transit decision-making is to ensure that decisions regarding transit incorporate public participation and feedback. As evidenced by the trend in TDP budgets of including greater resource allocations for 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.

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

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

Public Involvement	Required	Preferred
Approved TDP Public Involvement Plan (PIP)*		
Establish Project Review Committee		
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 Board (RWB)		
Advise FDOT, RWB, MPO of public meetings**		
Provide review opportunities to FDOT, RWB, 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, RWB, and MPO of all public meetings where the TDP is to be presented or discussed.

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

- **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 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.

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

- Obtaining public involvement plan approval from FDOT;
- Soliciting comments from the local Regional Workforce Board (RWB);
- Advising FDOT, local RWB, and local MPO of all public meetings; and
- Providing FDOT, local RWB, and local MPO an opportunity to review and comment during the development of the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program.

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, that outlines the public involvement action plan and a tentative schedule for the TDP. 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.

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.



Key Elements of a PIP

Table 3-5 shows TDP Rule requirements that are applicable to PIPs and what should be included to meet those

Table 3-5: TDP Rule Requirements on PIPs and What to Include to Meet Them

TDP Rule Requirement Applicable to PIP	What to Include in Your PIP
Provide opportunities for public involvement	Outline of public involvement efforts in early and later phases of TDP development.
Establish time limits for receipt of comments	Not necessary to address in the PIP as long as the agency sets time limits for receiving public comments during the TDP public involvement process.
Outline of public involvement activities planned	Outline of public involvement efforts in early and later phases of the TDP. Include tentative schedule, if available.
Solicit comments from RWBs	Letter of invitation to local RWB to serve on Project Review Committee (PRC). If RWB does not wish to participate or no PRC is set up, indicate how comments from RWB will be solicited.
Invite FDOT, RWB, and MPO to all public meetings	Plan for coordination efforts with FDOT, RWB, and MPO (letters, emails, etc.). If PRC is planned, invite them to serve on PRC. If not, invite them to TDP public meetings via email or phone.
Provide opportunities for FDOT, RWB, and MPO to review and comment on the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program	Plan showing how each of these items will be shared with FDOT, RWB, and MPO for comment, either as part of PRC or as separate email transmittals during TDP development process.
Include a description of the process used and the public involvement activities undertaken	Brief descriptions of each activity planned should go in PIP. The actual details of the outreach process, participants, activities, and results will be included subsequently in full TDP report.



Case Study

Benefits of MPO Coordination on TDP Outreach

LeeTran TDP, Lee County, FL

Moving its TDP one year forward to coincide with the Lee MPO's LRTP, LeeTran not only helped its local MPO develop a better LRTP (by feeding a "hot-off-the-press" 10-year transit plan into the 25-year LRTP, rather than the reverse), but also gained additional public input and exposure from the LRTP outreach. Coordination also helped to get the word out on both plans, identified pools of additional stakeholders, and enabled the sharing of resources.

requirements for FDOT to approve a draft PIP. The main goal of the PIP is to have a plan in place to provide adequate opportunities for public involvement. This includes outreach with the general public as well as all stakeholders of the plan, especially the RWB, FDOT, and MPO. The process to achieve this may be different from agency to agency due to respective needs, scale, and resources. The PIP provides an opportunity for FDOT to ensure that the transit agency intends to involve all required parties and also review the planned lineup of events and their tentative schedule. However, FDOT does not dictate on the number or nature of events or the scale of the efforts, as long as the effort outlined in the PIP sufficiently meets the Rule requirements.

An example of a PIP is provided in Appendix B-1 to help transit agencies identify the key elements and obtain a general idea of scale/extent of reporting needed for a PIP.

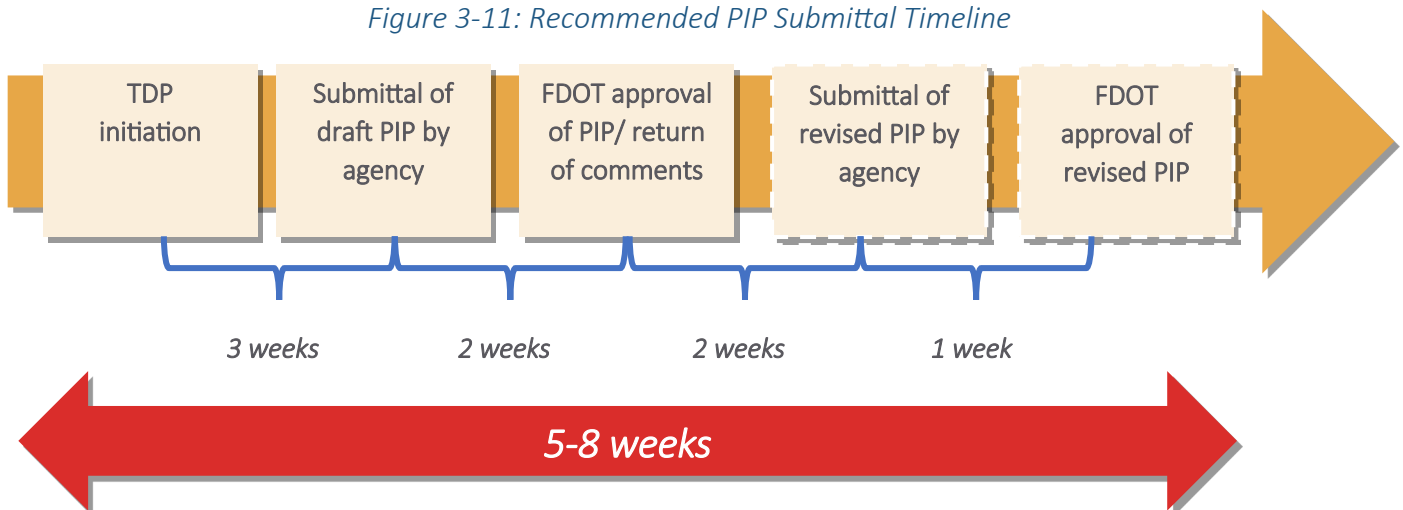
Setting Outreach Schedule/Timeline

The public outreach clock starts as soon as the agency initiates the TDP effort, typically with the development of the PIP. Coordination with local and regional partners like the MPO, FDOT, and RWB should also start concurrent to PIP development, within 1-3 weeks from TDP initiation.

FDOT has recommended a timeline for the PIP submittal and approval process, as shown in Figure 3-11. It is recommended that the PIP be submitted to FDOT for approval no later than three weeks after officially initiating

the TDP. FDOT then will either approve it within two weeks or provide comments to address before final approval will be conveyed. If the PIP is not approved and gets returned with comments, the transit agency will have two weeks to address the comments and resubmit. FDOT will then approve the PIP within one week from receipt of the resubmittal. Overall, the PIP submittal-to-approval process should take approximately five to eight weeks. However, during this time, the transit agency is encouraged to continue planning its outreach process and should even schedule and/or hold minor events, such as

Figure 3-11: Recommended PIP Submittal Timeline



review meetings or stakeholder interviews. Major public outreach efforts, such as public workshops, should not be conducted until the PIP is officially approved by FDOT.

TDP Outreach Guide for Agencies

Establish Project Review Committee

While not required, a Project Review Committee (PRC) is recommended to 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 PRC may primarily be composed of representatives from the transit agency, the local MPO, FDOT District Office, and the local area RWB. In addition, city/county officials representing affordable housing agencies, school boards, and/or other key community stakeholders may also be considered for inclusion.

Though PRC size can vary across TDP efforts, it may be prudent to limit the size of the team to no more than five to seven members to ensure that PRC meetings are not difficult to schedule, the support and review process is not overly burdened by too many perspectives, 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 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 beneficially educated.

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. In accordance with general marketing principles, more coordinated efforts tend to be 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. Shown

here are examples of TDP branding efforts, including for *Key Connections* (Key West Transit’s TDP) and *Charlotte Rides* (Charlotte County’s TDP).



KEY CONNECTIONS
A PLAN FOR TRANSIT

Involve Your Local MPO

Improving and expanding the relationship between transit agencies and their local MPOs can help to better plan outreach events, share resources, and expand the reach of TDP engagement activities. This coordination becomes much easier if the TDP process includes a PRC with a local MPO representative as a member. With or without a PRC, transit agencies initiating a TDP should always consider coordinating with the local MPO on outreach. From coordinating the timing of its LRTP to coordination on public involvement, the MPO can be a valuable partner, saving time, financial resources, and most importantly, helping develop a better transit plan for the community.



Case Study

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 will help ensure an engagement process with ethnic, racial, and economic diversity. For example, make sure that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons and people living in areas with affordable housing or in farming communities are also involved and have the same opportunity as people in other areas to provide feedback. 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

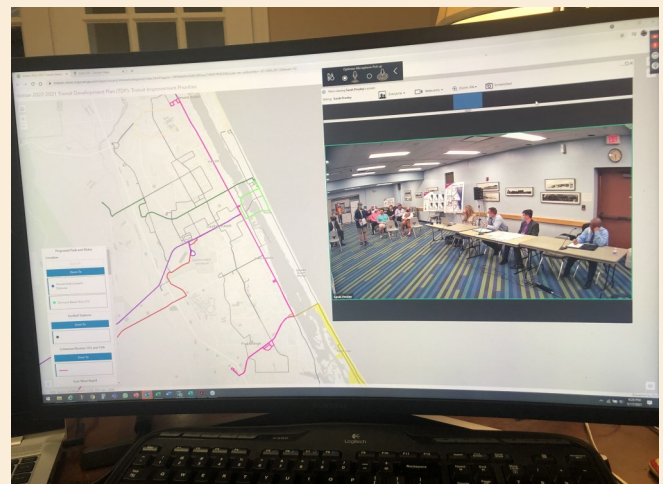
The proliferation of new technologies and their growing adoption by transit agencies opens up opportunities for public outreach in a variety of ways. Not only do many

Responding to Challenges of TDP Outreach during a Pandemic

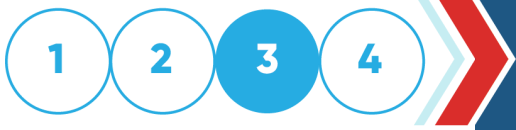
Votran TDP, Volusia County, FL

Engaging the general public and stimulating productive input on a community's need for transit is no easy task. Add health safety concerns due to a pandemic on top of that and the challenges can be daunting. This is what transit agencies completing their TDP outreach during the COVID-19 pandemic have faced since mid-2020.

Volusia County, which completed its TDP during the pandemic in 2020/2021, converted its initial plan for in-person public workshops to a virtual/in-person hybrid format, and greatly expanded the availability of information and avenues to provide input on websites and social media. Even a radio talk show was used to inform the public about the TDP and help bolster other available virtual and in-person options to provide input.



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



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

Weigh Virtual vs. In-person Options

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some transit agencies adjusted their TDP public outreach strategies to ensure they could continue to provide adequate opportunities in their communities for involvement and input. The early part of the pandemic forced agencies to temporarily suspend any in-person outreach efforts and connect to the community through virtual methods. Once the restrictions were eased on social distancing and gatherings, some agencies opted to use hybrid formats, which included opportunities for in-person and virtual participation. These experiences have opened up the possibility of continuing such hybrid workshops, or just going virtual, in the future.

As different costs are associated with each of these formats, an agency should carefully consider the benefits and logistics of in-person versus virtual formats prior to deciding on using one or the other, or both. For example, some recent TDP outreach experiences have shown that TDP Discussion Group Workshops (which typically include business leaders, social service agency representatives, etc.) may have better participation if they are held virtually. This may be due to many people working from home during the pandemic, or possibly due to its convenience for them regardless of where they work. Conversely, holding virtual-only engagement can have equity concerns for disadvantaged populations.

As participation is key to better TDP public involvement, agencies should weigh all of their format options and the amount of resources they have prior to determining what strategies should be used.

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

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.

RWB – 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 RWBs is available at <http://www.floridajobs.org/workforce-board-resources>)

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.

officials and transit agencies often remark that branding opens up the discussion with the public and prompts questions, therefore, engaging the community more 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 from a “toolbox” of possible activities. Together, the activities that are ultimately selected 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

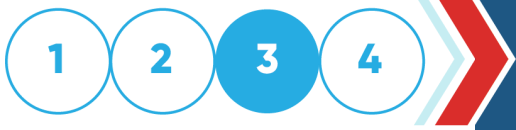
Despite the uniqueness of every community, in all likelihood, another transit agency has likely faced a similar set of needs and challenges during its own public outreach efforts. Therefore, relying on research and reports that provide case studies of effective outreach activities is another key way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



Source: Marion County TDP, 2017



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 to not 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 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 gap also may be counterproductive 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, and/or views; the compilation of meeting summaries; and the dispersion of attendees by attribute (i.e., zip code).

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 LEP individuals.
- 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.

Tables 3-6 and 3-7 provide a toolbox of potential outreach strategies and highlight the ideal TDP outreach phases each is best suited for, as well as a relative cost and participation potential for each activity. Appendix B-2 provides detailed descriptions of each of these strategies.

In addition, Appendix B-3 describes techniques and strategies that can be considered for informing the communities within a transit agency's local service area, including tools for just notifying people in general, as well as tools that also explain and notify about the TDP in particular. These are primarily one-way communication tools.

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.

MPO PPP Vs. TDP-Specific PIP

A transit agency preparing a TDP is encouraged to develop its own PIP (even if it is brief), but also has the option, if necessary, to instead use its local MPO's PPP. If the local MPO PPP has already been approved by both FHWA and FTA, it does not have to be submitted to FDOT for approval.

While that makes it easier for the transit agency than doing a separate PIP, the transit agency developing a TDP also must ensure that all the elements that are required and recommended in a TDP PIP (as identified in this Handbook) are sufficiently and appropriately addressed by the PPP it intends to use.

Transit Planning Charrette

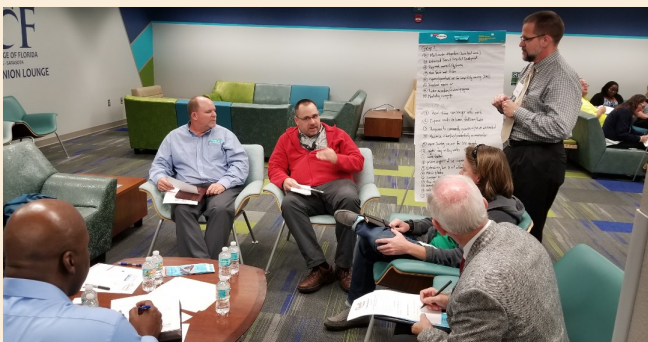


Case Study

Manatee Connect TDP, Manatee County, FL

Community and business leaders possess valuable opinions and influence that can help transit agencies plan for future service and develop partnerships of varying scale. The bird’s-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.



Event Piggy-Backing



Case Study

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.



Plan Development

Table 3-6: TDP Public Involvement Toolbox

	Outreach Phase				Relative Cost	Relative Effort	Participation Potential
	Zero	One	Two	Post-TDP			
Project Review Committee					Low	Low	
Stakeholder Interviews (phone)					Medium	Medium	
Public Open House					High	High	
Public Workshops (in-person)					High	High	
Board Visioning Workshops					Medium	High	
Transit Planning Charrettes					High	High	
Discussion Group (in-person)					High	High	
Bus Operator Interviews					Low	Medium	
Meeting in a Box					Medium	Medium	
Grassroots Outreach					Medium	High	
Social Media					Low/Med	Low/High	
Agency Websites					Low	Low	
Email Blasts					Low	Low	
Social Media Livestream					Medium	Medium	
Newspaper/Media					Medium	Low	
Public Outreach Software					High	Medium	
On-Going Comments					Low	Low	
Committee/Board Meetings					Medium	High	
Discussion Group (virtual)					Medium	High	
Discussion Group (Hybrid)					High	High	
Public Workshop (virtual)					High	High	
Public Workshop (Hybrid)					High	High	
Project Websites					Medium	Medium	

Table 3-7: TDP Public Involvement Toolbox—Surveys

Surveys	Outreach Phase				Relative Cost	Relative Effort	Participation Potential
	Zero	One	Two	Post-TDP			
On-Board Bus Rider					High	High	
Bus Operator					Low	Low	
General Public – Online					Low	Medium	
General Public – Paper					Medium	Medium	
Employers/Employees					Medium	Medium	
College/Educational Institution					Medium	Medium	
Rider Intercept					High	High	
Mail Out					Medium	Medium	
Telephone					Medium	Medium	

3.4 Situation Appraisal

New in this Section:

- *Expanding Plans Review to Include Safety, Asset Management, Affordable Housing*
- *Coordination on Land Development & Development Review*
- *Transit Safety and Assets/Resources*
- *Case Study: Tying Development Approvals to Transit*
- *Other New Case Studies and Best Practice Examples*

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 are 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.*



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- *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 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 in meeting the requirements, as well as conducting an effective situation appraisal effort that would facilitate 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 3-8 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.

Table 3-8: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Situation Appraisal	Required	Preferred
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	●	
Transit Safety & Assets/Resources		●
10-Year Transit Ridership Projections*	●	

*This should be included with the overall demand assessment, as discussed in Handbook Section 3.6 - Transit Demand Assessment.

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 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.

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.

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 shown in Table 3-8, a situation appraisal combines elements that meet the minimum requirements per TDP Rule with industry best practices to 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, Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSPs), MPO LRTPs;
- State of Florida Transportation Plan and Regional Planning Council plans and reports;
- Safety and asset management plans, including PTASPs and TAM plans, as well as any established targets for safety and asset management; and
- Other relevant documents such as affordable housing programs/plans, campus master plans, downtown master plans, corridor studies, etc.

In addition, the review of relevant economic development plans also may provide insight into 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 own overall goals, objectives, and policies over the next decade. As such, those policies/plans found to be supportive of the transit system should be identified and noted within the TDP.

Expanding the Reach of Situation Appraisal



Case Study

TBARTA RTDP, Tampa Bay, 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 TBARTA Regional Transit Development Plan (RTDP) developed a situation appraisal that tied in the region’s guiding principles. The situation appraisal was enhanced and focused on the guiding principles throughout while addressing the required topics for the unique regional environment.

In addition, the topics addressed within the situation appraisal were also expanded to include Transit Operations and Transit Image.

Situation Appraisal Elements	Guiding Principles					
	Implementation Focus	Regional Partnerships	Integrated Planning	Sustainable Funding	Community Engagement	Innovative Solutions
PLANNING						
Socioeconomic Trends			✓			
Travel Behavior & Commuting Trends			✓			
Land Use Policy			✓			
Community Feedback					✓	
Transit Technologies	✓	✓	✓			✓
FUNDING						
	✓	✓	✓	✓		
OPERATIONS						
Transit Operations	✓	✓	✓			
Organizational Attributes	✓					
IMAGE						
		✓	✓			

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 low-income segments), age distribution, income level, vehicle ownership, 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 reflect 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.

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.

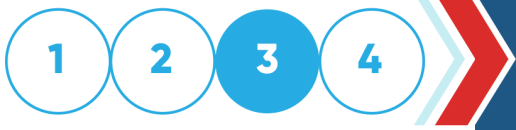


The notion of multimodalism – connectivity among the various modes of transportation to provide the seamless movement of people, goods, and services within a community – is a goal that many local governments can try to achieve via land use planning policies, many of which may aid in the delivery of transit service. Communities 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 local transit agency to promote its services and make transit a viable alternative for those communities.

Community Feedback

Public outreach may be the most important component for developing a TDP that promotes the local community's vision 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 done, it still is 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 permeate 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 a 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.

- **Mobile Fare Payment** – This option provides a fast and convenient means of paying/collecting fares via software applications/technologies. This payment method allows users to board without a physical pass and pre-pay with credit cards or other automated means. Smart phone apps, smart cards, and credit cards are some of main methods used by transit systems that have implemented mobile payment technologies. Agencies are increasingly implementing one-stop shop apps that riders can use to pay fares and plan trips. Utilizing this method helps eliminate cash payment, promote seamless regional fares, decrease boarding times, and increase operational efficiency.
- **Autonomous Vehicles/Connected Vehicles (AV/CV)** – Such technologies are already having an impact on transit services. While still mostly pilot programs, 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 have begun to consider how to incorporate these technologies to enhance and/or expand their services.

Regional Coordination

Regional coordination and planning are effective for transit only 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



Case Study

Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

2016 Pasco County Transit Infrastructure Design Manual

Pasco County Public Transportation (GoPasco) 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 TDP major update. The County continues to refine a process that ties 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.

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.

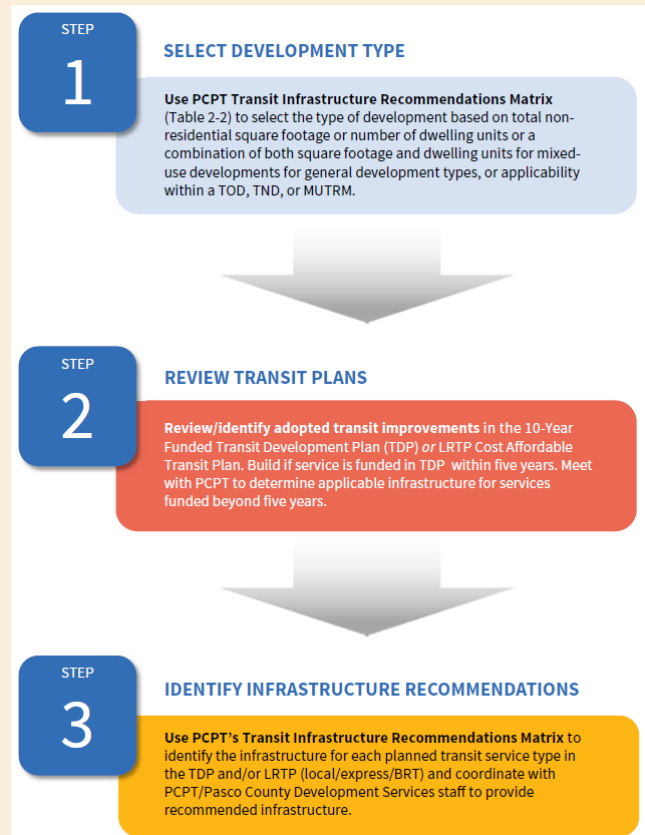
Governmental Coordination

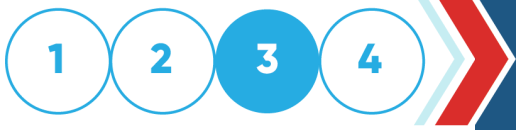
Many types of transit improvements involve the coordination of many layers of government, often at the federal, state, and local levels. The need for congruency of land use, road networks, and transit planning to support a successful public transit system often makes it necessary for multiple government 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, public-private 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 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.

Coordination on Land Development & Development Review

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



Case Study

Successfully Tying Development Approvals to Transit

Polk County, FL

As part of revised land development code updates, Polk County recently developed a number of overlay districts in the Comprehensive Plan and regulations for special districts. In coordination with the City of Lakeland, many of the City’s municipal codes were updated to parallel and support the County codes. The resulting codes highlight activity centers based on key criteria, and for transit include: Transit Corridors (within 1/4 mile of transit fixed-route), Transit Centers (within 1 mile of transit access point), and Transit Center Cores (within 1/4 mile of transit access point). These activity centers recognize growing areas, areas for infill and redevelopment, and fully dense core areas such as Central Business Districts.

The County and City have coordinated with the transit provider, Citrus Connection, and the FDOT District One Commuter Assistance Program to ensure that regulations work and the language in development orders is adequate. Based on the overlay districts, complete streets, walking and bicycle trails, transit service levels and facilities, and other related infrastructure are integrated into consolidated development orders for major developments. Based on these newer codes, the County has initiated development approval requirements that include developers who contribute not only land for bus transfer or stop facilities, but to purchase buses with wraps and ongoing advertisements, and, most importantly, at least five years of bus operations. Two specific project examples with these parameters have included the Harden/Parkway Redevelopment Plan and the Wilson Property DRI that includes the Florida Polytechnic University FL campus and other facilities.



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

alternatives and their evaluation and priority as projects for the 10-year implementation plan.

Adding the safety and asset targets should help in identifying what improvement strategies could be included in the TDP that will help transit agencies not only meet their set targets, but also help the MPO understand and better integrate the targets in its own processes and plans. It is recommended that all safety and asset targets be added as an appendix to the final TDP, making them available in one place for reference. Some MPOs may have more information as well as dashboards on these targets set up on their websites. If available, agencies also should provide links to this information in the same appendix.

10-Year Transit Ridership Projections

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

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.

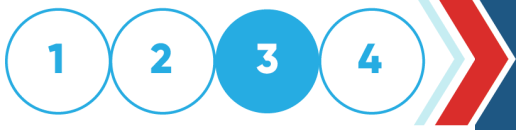
There are some resources to assist transit agencies beyond just being the entity emphasizing the need for revised codes and regulations. FDOT's Public Transit Office and Commuter Assistance Program are available to assist with TDM policies. Sponsoring and attending urban design classes is important and beneficial to opening dialogue and getting everyone on the same page. Reaching out to cities and counties with sample codes can be very helpful.

Note that many local jurisdictions now are implementing Complete Street policies and improvements. Transit agencies should be at the table, influencing and making sure Complete Street projects are implemented appropriately and in a way that does not negatively impact transit services. In some recent cases, for example, transit stops were initially hidden by buffering elements and pedestrian access to bus stops were obscured by treatments such as flower pots or landscaping elements.

As a best practice, each transit agency should foster and develop a process outside of the TDP to have staff regularly involved with those reviewing and approving development. The timing and format of this coordination should be adequate to allow review and input to projects as they are going through development and prior to design.

Transit Safety & Assets/Resources

Another best practice and one that will assist transit agencies and MPOs especially is to expand the scope of the TDP Situation Appraisal to add discussion on safety and asset management. This should include the review and incorporation of safety and asset management targets in TDP goals, at a minimum. Additionally, these should support the identification of and clear correlation among many of the targets, as well as the development of



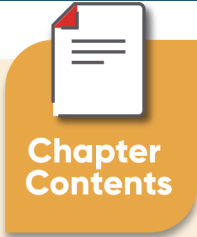
estimation should be conducted about the same time as conducting the situation appraisal, it is most effective when used with the other demand and needs estimation tools/efforts, as summarized in Section 3.6 - Transit Demand Assessment. This will allow the transit agency to have access to all the tools 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

New in this Section:

- *Input From Agency’s Other Key Plans/Targets*
- *Developing Goals/Objectives—guidance*
- *Addressing Pertinent Topics*
- *Tying Goals to TDP Implementation Plan—guidance and a Case Study*

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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 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.

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.

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

Goals & Objectives	Required	Preferred
Mission & Vision	●	
Goals & Objectives	●	
Guiding Principles		●
Integrate safety and State of Good Repair targets		●
Provide opportunities for FDOT, MPO, and RWB to review and comment	●	

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.

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.

Input From Agency’s Other Key Plans/Targets

TDPs should also integrate/address the emergence of transit performance targets and standards in Federal PTASPs and TAM Plans. While these may be integrated in

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.

other components at varying scales, the Plans and Policy Review of a TDP should identify the current targets of these measures and the progress toward meeting those targets. These plans should be reviewed and a discussion of their issues and what is needed to meet the targets, and how then will the targets be integrated into the TDP results, should be added. These targets also should be considered for inclusion in the TDP goals and objectives.

In general, transit agencies should try to show the correlation between any targets/thresholds identified in the goals and objectives and the improvement projects identified and evaluated for the implementation plan.

Coordination with FDOT/RWB/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 RWB, 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 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

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

What TDP is Not



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

Ok. What is it, then?



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 for 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.

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.

Transit agencies determine how many objectives and policies they would like to include when completing a major update to the TDP. FDOT has not stipulated the volume or areas of concern that transit agencies adopt for their goals, objectives, or policies. Similar to most TDP components that are required, the agencies should ensure relevancy and appropriateness for their local community and system. FDOT simply stresses that there are benefits to keeping the number of objectives and policies to a manageable and easily measurable scale. FDOT also encourages that they be as concise as possible and to limit repetitiveness throughout the goals.

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 toward specific goals and objectives. Although they are not a necessary part of the goals and



SMART Goals

A SMART goal is defined as one that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound and, because of this, it 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?

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 3-10.

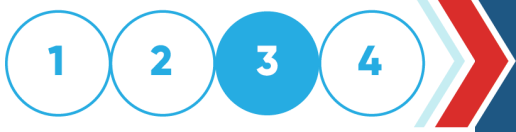
Addressing Pertinent Topics

Addressing pertinent topics, such as transit access to affordable housing or mobile fare payment across modes or systems, during the analytical and goal-setting components of the TDP will make the resulting plan more robust and help address many of the critical issues and needs, as well.

In addition, technology, the desire to connect regionally, and COVID-19 have all provided reasons for transit agencies to reevaluate how they do business going forward, both internally as well as externally. Therefore, it

Table 3-10: 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.



is important to ensure the plan includes meaningful goals and objectives on innovation, mobility, and safety to better address those areas and also tie the plan to the FTP and other FDOT initiatives, such as the Vital Few.

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.

Tying Goals to TDP Implementation Plan

After the goals and objectives are developed, the agency should keep them in mind when developing the potential transit improvements. As these goals and objectives are set up to guide the agency to its desired vision for transit, the recommended improvements in the TDP should reflect the direction to which the agency is heading. It is considered best practice for transit agencies to tie the improvements they wish to implement with the goals they want to reach.

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 both internal (i.e., employees) and external



Case Study

Connecting Implementation Plan to Goals

Votran TDP Volusia County, FL

Carefully developed goals, objectives, and policies can greatly help a transit agency achieve its vision for transit, if the TDP improvements are developed with them in mind and those improvements also can be tied back to them at the end. With its 2021 Votran TDP, Volusia County not only developed improvements that may help meet Votran’s transit goals, staff also tied those planned improvements in the 10-year implementation plan back to their transit goals.

TDP Improvements	Implementation Year	Annual Operating Cost (2021\$)	Total Capital Cost (2021\$)	Potential Revenue Source	TDP Goal Accomplished
Service Improvements					
Short-Term Redesigned Network	2022 -2024	\$16,307,312	\$150,000	Local	1 2 3 4
North DeLand Circulator	2025	\$571,576	\$1,000,000	FDOT SunRail	1 2 3
South DeLand MOD	2025	\$206,364	\$110,000	FDOT Serv. Dev./Local	1 2 3
East Deltona MOD	2025	\$206,364	\$110,000	Local	1 2 3
North Deltona MOD	2025	\$206,364	\$110,000	Local	1 2 3
South Deltona MOD	2025	\$206,364	\$110,000	Local	1 2 3
East-West Rapid	2027	\$1,691,928	\$2,500,000	FDOT Urban Corridor	1 2 3 4
Volusia-Flagler Express	2030	\$259,345	\$1,000,000	FDOT Urban Corridor	1 2
15-minute service on Routes 103 and 104	Unfunded	\$2,554,800	\$3,000,000	-	1 2 4
Daytona-Deltona Commuter Express	Unfunded	\$259,345	\$1,000,000	-	1 2 4
Downtown-Beach Connector	Unfunded	\$946,354	\$1,000,000	-	1 2 4
I-95 West-Beach Connector	Unfunded	\$694,976	\$1,000,000	-	1 2 4
Orange City Connector	Unfunded	\$303,416	\$500,000	-	1 2 4
Ormond Beach Circulator	Unfunded	\$347,488	\$500,000	-	1 2 4
Ponce Inlet-Port Orange Connector	Unfunded	\$303,416	\$500,000	-	1 2 4

(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 transit 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.

This will also help in the development of the APR. Once a TDP major update is completed, a progress update of the goals and objectives must take place each interim year as part of the TDP Annual Progress Report process until the next major update occurs.

With a clear understanding of the agency's vision, mission, goals, and objectives, and an expectation that performance is carefully monitored, both the employees and the organizations that the agency relies on for support can be confident that its personnel are performing well and financial resources are being well spent.

3.6 Transit Demand Assessment

New in this Section:

- *Emphasis on Affordable Housing in Market Assessments*
- *Projecting Demand for Premium Transit*
- *Updated Case Studies, Tips, and Best Practice Examples*

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 and as 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.

Table 3-11: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Transit Demand Assessment	Required	Preferred
Traditional Markets		●
Discretionary Markets		●
Travel Markets		●
Ridership Projections	●	



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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.

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, supporting the implementation 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.

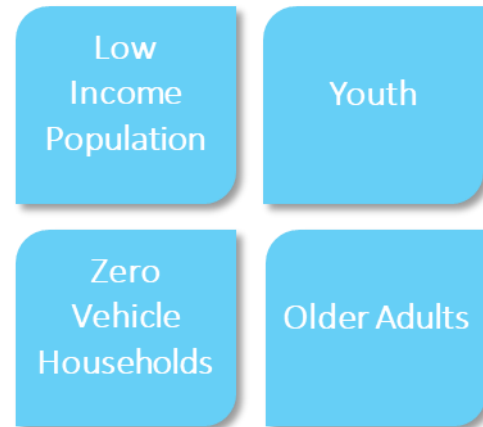
Therefore, an assessment of multiple transit markets should be conducted as part of the TDP transit demand assessment, possibly through the utilization of techniques that can assess demand based on more than one variable. However, it is important to remember that individual market assessments for transit 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 general 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 transit demand.

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. When capturing population segments with low-income, special emphasis also should be given to ensure people living in affordable housing programs are included. Making transit services available to this segment of the general population, which may have a much higher tendency to use those services to access work/economic opportunities, is critically important. The most recent demographic data from the Census or ACS may be used to assess these and any other applicable traditional markets, as 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 also may 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 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



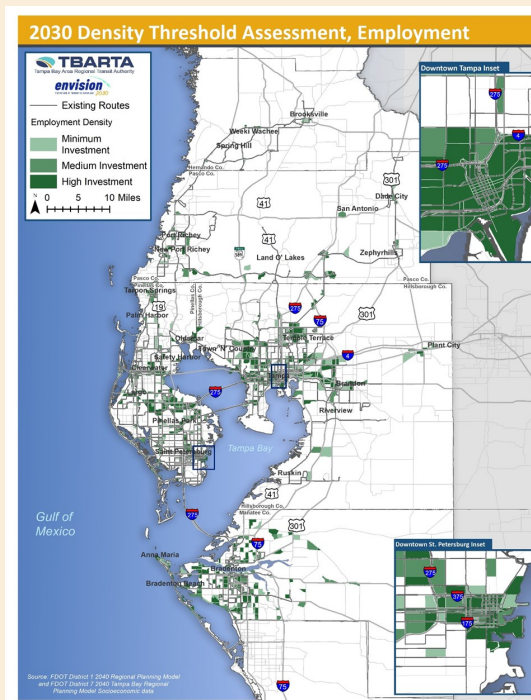
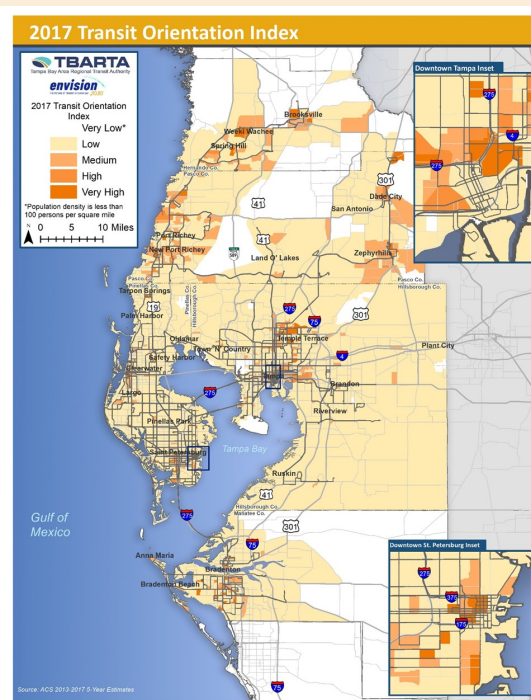
Case Study

Using Data Driven Tools to Analyze Transit Markets

TBARTA RTDP, Tampa Bay, FL

Traditional Markets—TBARTA in the Tampa Bay region 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 toward transit. The TBARTA TOI map (below left) shows the color-coding associated with the level of transit orientation and, thus, potential demand based on traditional markets with current services overlaid.

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 five local MPOs’ most recent L RTPs were inputs into the DTA. The GIS-based DTA analysis shown on the map (below right) helped TBARTA identify areas with the potential to support transit service ranging from regular bus services to premium transit modes such as rail (i.e., very high investment).





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 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 trip pairs may reveal frequently-occurring, or “major,” pairs. An assessment of these pairs can reveal potential demand for transit.

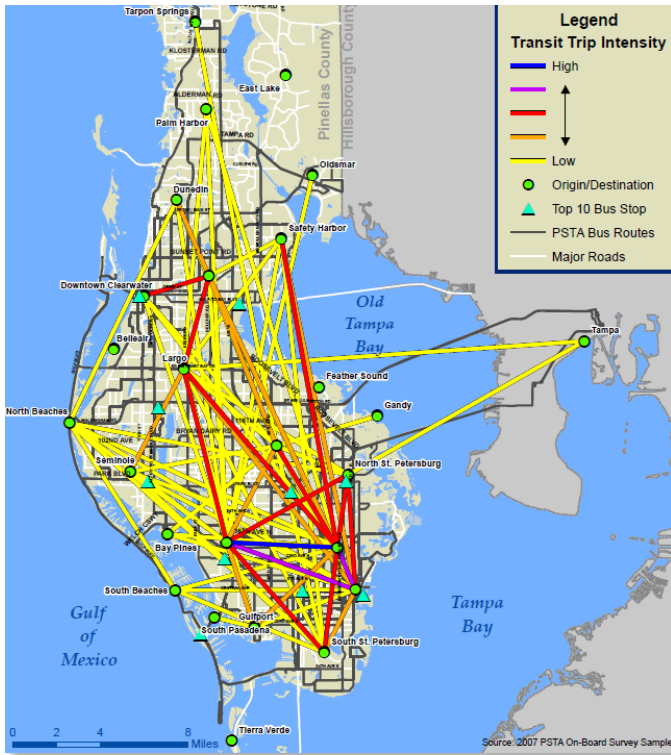
Bus Rider Travel Markets

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 3-12. 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

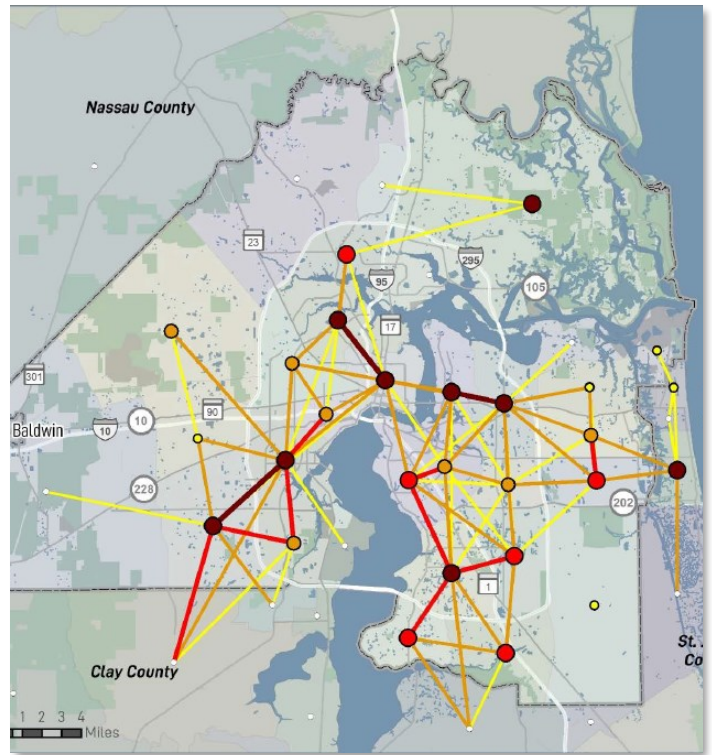
A GIS-based review of origin-destination pairs from a regional travel model for automobile person trips can reveal frequently-occurring, major trip pairs for non-transit riders. As regional models typically include data for current trip and future trip projections, alongside a map of the transit network, 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., as represented in Figure 3-13.

Figure 3-12: Transit Rider Travel Flows



Source: Pinellas County TDP, 2008

Figure 3-13: Projected Trip Flows



Source: JTA TDP, 2019

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.

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 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, forecasting capability is critical to the TDP development process.



Selecting A Forecasting Method

FDOT's guidance for the TDP's ridership forecasting processes includes the following:

“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 information 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).

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 which 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.

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 approval letter as an
-
- **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.

The 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, 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 COAs.

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;
- Allowance for user-defined network characteristics, fare inputs, local agency socio-economic data and growth factors, and other agency specific inputs; and
- Provision of 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

TBEST Resources for Transit Agencies



The TBEST website (www.tbest.org), 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.

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.

Table 3-12 shows an example of how projected ridership data can be summarized in a TDP.

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

Table 3-12: 10-Year TDP Ridership Projections Summary—Example

Route Name	2021 No Growth Scenario	2030 No Growth Scenario	2030 TDP Needs Scenario	2020-30 No Growth % Change	2020-30 Needs % Change
5	62,831	72,685	147,293	16%	134%
10	89,149	101,864	140,819	14%	58%
15	58,173	61,075	127,935	5%	120%
20	110,805	127,667	139,184	15%	26%
30	92,487	119,350	103,445	29%	12%
40	41,962	52,486	101,366	25%	142%
50	88,568	111,812	141,918	26%	60%
Airport to Downtown	-	-	277,742	-	-
Beach Link	-	-	41,423	-	-
Midtown MOD	-	-	342,678	-	-
Total	543,975	646,939	1,563,803	19%	187%

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 to assess ridership changes.

Regional Travel Demand Models

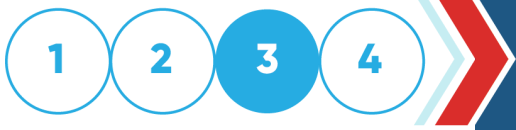
When using software models, TBEST may be the logical choice for estimating bus ridership with its support from FDOT, but agencies are not precluded from using other methods, as mentioned previously. For example, transit agencies in larger urban areas where conventional “4-step” travel demand models have 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 that are now becoming popular in the transit arena, such as app-based on-demand transit services, 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

New in this Section:

- Incorporating FDOT Priorities in Project Evaluation
- Expanding the Pool of Evaluation Criteria
- Case Study: Complete Set of Needs in One Snapshot

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. (Sometimes also referred to as strategies, “alternatives” are individual proposed improvements or projects to consider for inclusion in the TDP.) A careful, objective consideration of these findings can ultimately 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 that have been identified in the TDP’s previous investigative process. 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



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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 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 3-13: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Alternatives Development & Evaluation	Required	Preferred
10-Year TDP Alternatives	●	
FDOT/RWB/MPO Review	●	
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 cover service, capital/infrastructure, and technology needs, as well as policy improvements (an example may include coordinating with the Commuter Assistance Program and/or the MPO on potential TDM options).

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

Meeting Community Needs



TDP Tips

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.

corridors) versus offering local, neighborhood coverage;

- Operating a system oriented toward the downtown or CBD versus one oriented toward outlying activity centers; and/or
- Applying innovative strategies and approaches used successfully elsewhere.

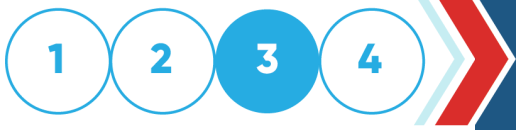
Financially Unconstrained Needs

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 and considered. 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.

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 those 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, and 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

“Unconstrained” Needs



TDP Tips

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 stage of the TDP major update process.

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

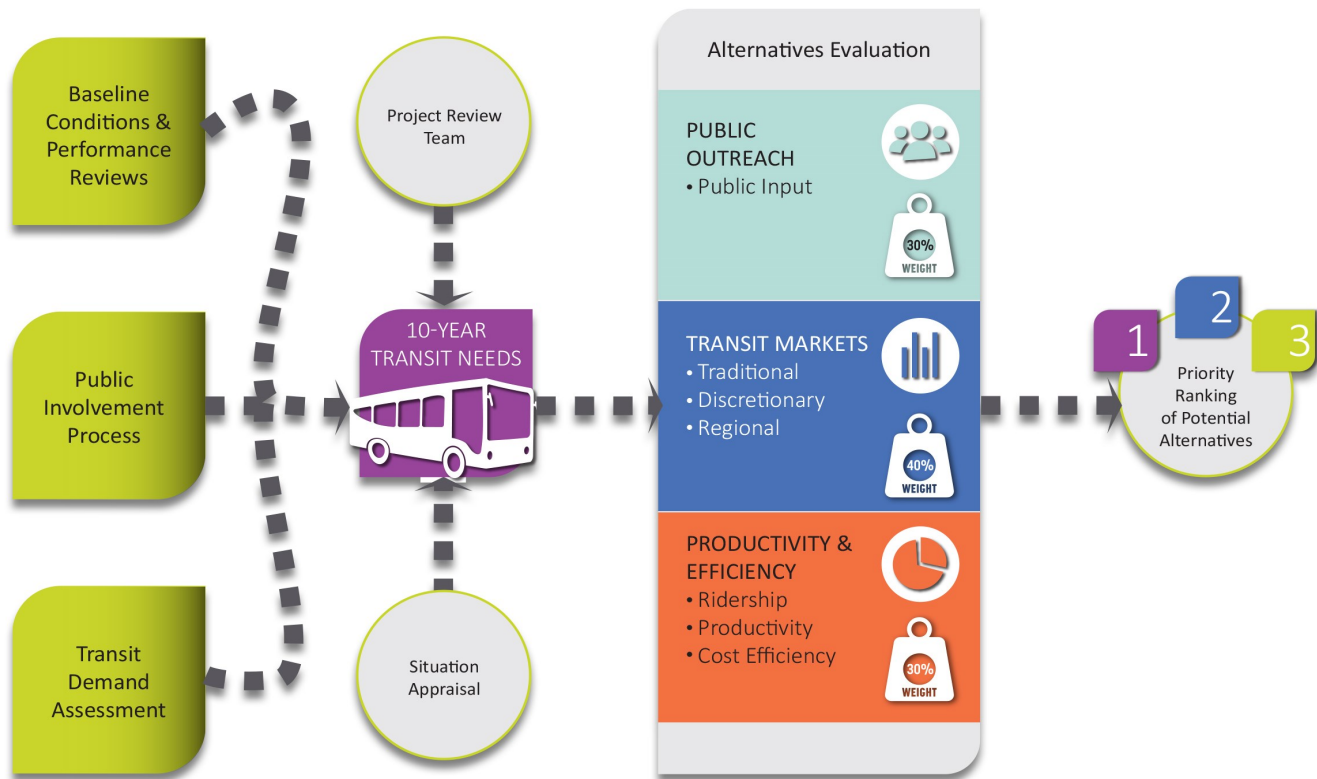
A three-step methodology is suggested to evaluate and prioritize transit alternatives, which consists of the following steps:

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

Figure 3-13 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.

Figure 3-13: TDP Alternatives Development and Evaluation Process Example



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.

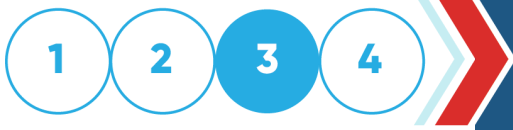
A number of criteria that are suggested for transit agencies to consider for evaluating their TDP alternatives are presented next in this section. In addition, Table 3-14 provides a sample evaluation matrix for evaluating and prioritizing a set of TDP alternatives.

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 in qualitative fashion, 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.

Additional Evaluation Criteria

In addition to criteria that may be considered important by the local community and/or transit agency, it may be prudent to use additional criteria to ensure the alternative projects also receive due recognition and rank well from the regional and state perspectives, as well. This is especially true when funding from regional partners is crucial to implementation. Incorporating priorities that FDOT has established to accomplish its vision and mission in the TDP evaluation process may help transit agencies secure necessary state support for their projects. These priorities include the following.

- Improve safety
- Enhance mobility
- Inspire innovation

Transit agencies should consider giving a “leg up” to improvement strategies that may also help these FDOT priorities during the TDP project evaluation process.

Table 3-14: Sample TDP Alternatives Evaluation Process

Category	Criteria	Measure of Effectiveness	Criteria Weight	Effort Needed to Evaluate		
				High	Medium	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

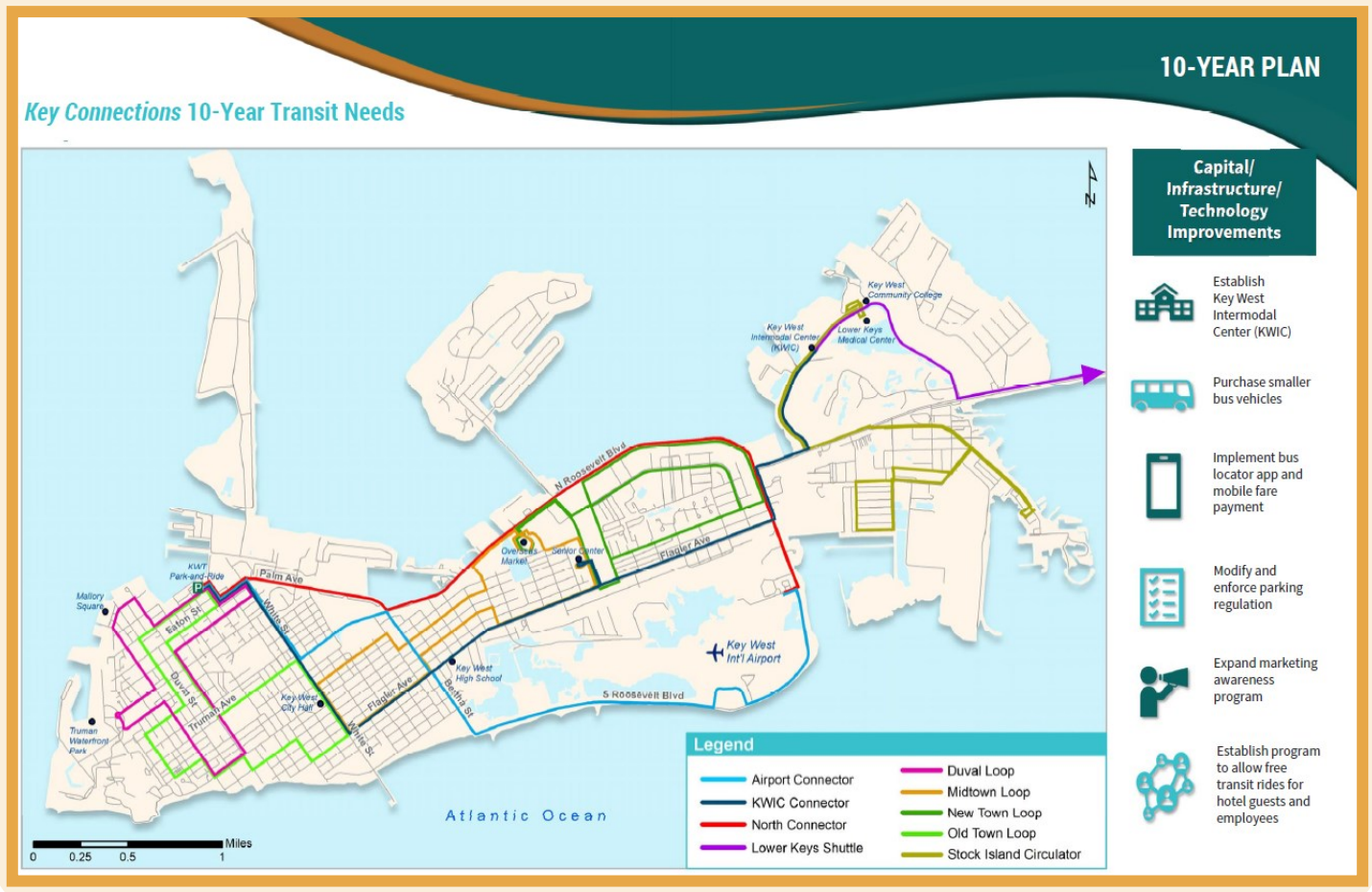
Complete Set of TDP Needs in One Snapshot

Key Connections TDP, Key West, FL

Displaying and summarizing the eventual set of priority alternatives is often a challenge, as well.

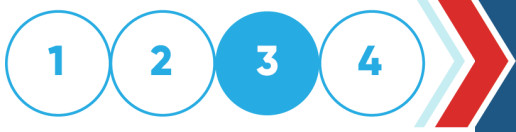
Visuals and maps are key mediums that should be used to convey the identified alternatives. Oftentimes, these mediums can result in an effective tool that can be used during the second phase of TDP public involvement to solicit productive feedback directly on the alternatives.

As part of its 2020 TDP, which was branded as Key Connections, Key West Transit in the City of Key West developed a map that included all of the identified alternatives, including service, capital/infrastructure/technology, 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 Key West Transit prioritize them.



It is important that TDPs not only discuss the existence of local and regional priorities or targets, whether they are from FDOT or from their TAM or safety plans, but also identify and evaluate projects that support the aforementioned priorities.

For example, FDOT has identified three strategies for enhancing mobility, including attracting discretionary ridership, supporting premium transit, and improving technology-based first/last mile services. Transit agencies should take into account the importance that FDOT places



on projects that incorporate such strategies when they evaluate their 10-year lineup of projects, if they anticipate any FDOT funding support for them.

Transit agencies should also focus on convenience, comfort, and connections when projects are selected and prioritized for inclusion in the TDP. This would put the priorities for the transit agency in line with FDOT processes as the Department establishes its formalized criteria for project selection under its ongoing initiatives, such as Vital Few. For example, priorities for FDOT that transit agencies may also want to accommodate, if applicable, might include intermodal centers with access to first/last mile services, shelters at stops with connectivity to sidewalks/ bicycle paths, and convenient payment methods.

Ranking TDP Priorities

The correct set of criteria can provide an agency with 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 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.

3.8 10-Year Transit Plan

New in this Section:

- Clarity on Reporting Year and Dollars for Financial Plan
- Identifying Sources of Transit Funding
- FDOT Coordination on Funding
- Guidance on TDP Performance Monitoring Program
- New/Updated TDP Tips and Best Practices



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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 (also referred to as the implementation program) and financial plan, summarized as a 10-year planning 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 10-year phased implementation and financial plans 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 3-14: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

10-Year Transit Plan	Required	Preferred
TDP Alternatives	●	
Financial Plan	●	
Financial Summary Presentation		●
Implementation Plan	●	
List of Unfunded Needs	●	
Marketing Program		●
Performance Monitoring	●	

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 3-14:

- A list of service, capital, planning, and policy recommendations;
- A 10-year implementation plan for the funded recommendations;

Figure 3-14: Elements of the 10-Year Plan



- 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.

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 should 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 & 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 costs 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 up front, 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.

Another important consideration for the financial plan is the appropriate reporting period to use (i.e., calendar year vs. fiscal year). It is recommended as a best practice that the TDP use the same fiscal year cycle as the transit agency and should report the financial plan years in fiscal years.

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. Transit agencies can access it at <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

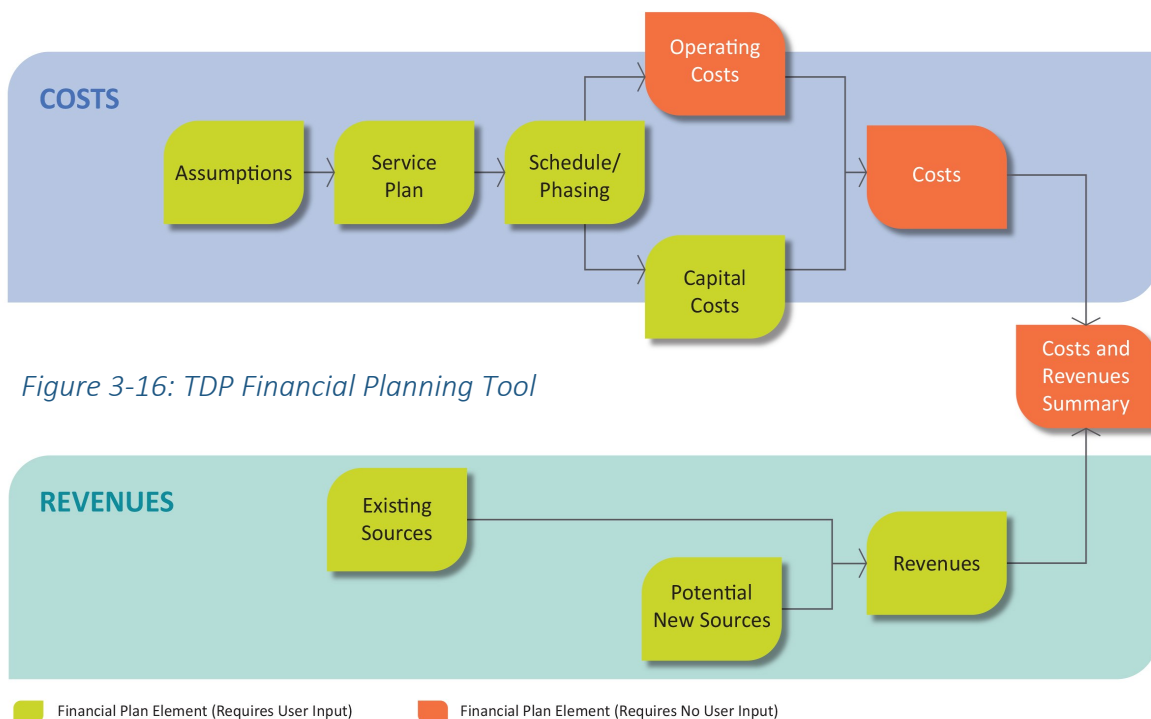


Figure 3-16: TDP Financial Planning Tool

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 among agencies, it is recommended that “cost per revenue service hour” be used as the base unit 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.
- **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

Painting the Funding Picture

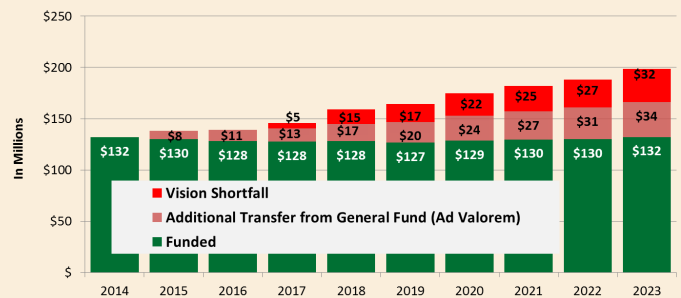


Case Study

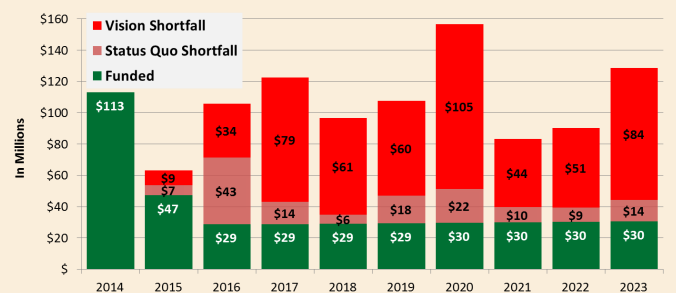
BCT Connected TDP, Broward County, FL

Buried in the details of estimating the costs 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.

Vision Plan—Operating Costs & Revenues



Vision Plan—Capital Costs & Revenues





Be Prepared for New Funding Opportunities

When identifying the need to track and/or explore new funding opportunities, it is also prudent for transit agencies to be prepared and ready to pursue and apply for new funding sources. To be prepared, transit agencies should fully consider funding opportunities as they complete their TDPs and the associated financial plans. This includes developing legitimate alternatives that meet funding program goals and having a robust list of unfunded services and needs. During the TDP process, these services that could potentially be eligible for application and receipt of new funding should clearly be justified and defined as a need, and be ready to move ahead. These “shovel-ready” projects put a transit agency in an advantageous position to pursue and secure new funding when it becomes available.

services, capital/infrastructure/technology costs such as additional 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** – 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. As a best practice, the costs in TDPs are recommended to be shown in Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars. The YOE dollars are dollars that are adjusted for inflation from the present time.

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 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 3-15. 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 [APCs] for 10 buses) by year over the 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

Figure 3-15: 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

differences minus costs 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.

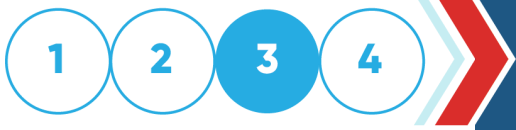
Funding for the 10-Year Plan

Most TDPs consider two main categories of funding, one for operating expenses and one for capital/planning costs. Within each of these categories 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 identify, increase, and leverage these resources to fund additional services and equipment.

Identifying Sources of Transit Funding

Given the current state of transit funding across the U.S., it is increasingly important for transit agencies to track and/or explore new funding opportunities as they arise. Some of the more recent sources have been associated with and/or support affordable housing, on-demand mobility, technology deployment, and alternative fuels. Examples of new FTA funding programs include the Areas of Persistent Poverty program and the MOD Sandbox program. These programs have unique prerequisites and transit agencies



should be aware of them and open to tailoring their services and projects to meet the funding requirements.

When planning a project, transit agencies also should think about what funding opportunities may arise. For example, some new TOD funding source has been emerging almost annually, so having ready-to-implement projects with complete descriptions is imperative to successfully applying and receiving such funds.

Coordinating with FDOT District Offices on potential new transit funding sources also is prudent. FDOT often has funding opportunities or can help transit agencies pursue new sources. FDOT also considers the expansion of funding eligibility for grant programs at various times. And, currently, mobility projects within the existing statutory framework are under review. The end result could provide District Offices with expanded options to use existing traditional and non-traditional Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) capacity funding for mobility projects directly related to FDOT's priorities and emphasis areas.

Transit agencies should understand the need to be aware of the eligibility requirements for potential new State and Federal funding sources, especially as FTA and/or FDOT redefine "capacity" and encompass mobility. This would allow local agencies to leverage the use of different State/Federal funding types for previously unallowed services and projects.

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 is also the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program, previously known as the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants. FTA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also fund air quality projects and projects

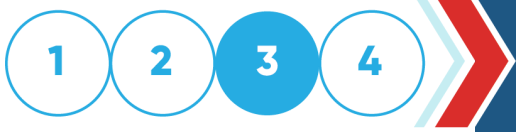
involving alternative fuels. Pursuing Small or New Starts funding for larger projects and major investments is also a consideration. Having a complete picture of the opportunities available to transit systems is necessary to determine the best sources to pursue.

At 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 and/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.

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 for it 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 previously. 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.

FDOT Coordination on Funding

Regular and frequent engagement with FDOT can prove valuable as the Department develops and/or revises application processes and reporting requirements for State funding programs to reflect its priorities in the FTP or in initiatives such as the Vital Few. This ongoing coordination will help transit agencies gain an early understanding/knowledge about any upcoming funding opportunities applicable to them and their eligibility requirements, putting them in a strong position for securing such funding.

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 respective 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 shift resources to new or enhanced services identified in the TDP implementation plan, as well.

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 3-15. 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.

Performance Monitoring Program

The current TDP Rule requires a “monitoring program to track performance measures,” to help achieve the transit goals established for the next 10 years in the TDP. Such a program can also be expanded to establish and track progress made toward implementing the TDP recommendations and be compared with the established goals and objectives, which also can aid in compiling APRs. In most cases, the efficiency and effectiveness measures discussed in Section 3.2 of this handbook are appropriate considerations for a monitoring program that can provide

Table 3-15: Sample TDP Implementation Plan

DP Improvement	Implementation Year	Annual Operating Cost		Total Capital Cost		Revenue Sources	TDP Goal/Objective
		(2018\$)	(2018\$)	(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							
<i>Fixed-Routes</i>							
Downtown Circulator	2027	\$ 385,463	\$ 465,000	N/A			4.2
Regional Express	Unfunded	\$ 308,370	\$ 465,000	FDOT Urban Corr.			4.4
<i>Mobility On Demand</i>							
North Community	2020	\$ 308,370	\$ 80,000	FDOT Service Dev./ Local			4.5
South County	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

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 should be drawn to past levels of performance, peer performance levels, or other benchmarks. This typically happens every five years with the TDP major update, but such efforts in the interim can help the agency and also the APR process.

Finally, an enhanced and robust monitoring program can also 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.

The performance monitoring program should provide support to accomplish three primary purposes:

- Provide support for measuring the advancement of the system goals and objectives for the APR.
- Tie into and support any local performance measures an agency already reports to its governing board or other stakeholders. Many systems already have internal reports with sets of key performance indicators (KPIs) submitted to their boards. Rather than developing new measures, or redundant reports or tracking processes, transit agencies should explore whether their current processes can be coordinated and overlapped to reduce reporting efforts and/or cut down on the number of items being tracked or reported.
- Provide the transit agency with the data for the annual Productivity and Performance Measures published in a local newspaper, as required for the Public Transit Block Grant program, under 341.071 Florida Statutes.

Plan Performance Comparisons

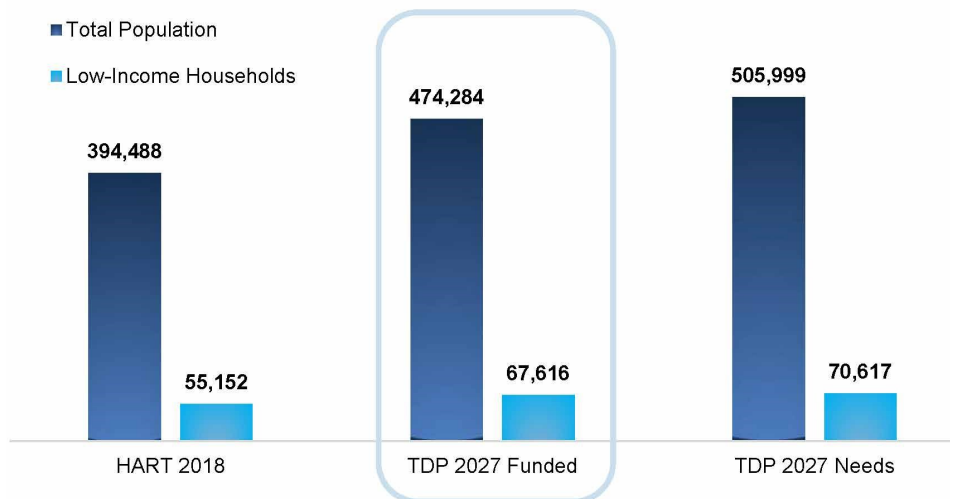
After the completion of the financial plan, it is prudent to conduct a comparison of the existing transit system to both the funded plan network and the needs plan network for the horizon (i.e., tenth) year of the TDP. This effort can allow agencies to contrast differences in ridership levels or total populations being served using ArcGIS and TBEST tools for the respective networks, as shown in Figure 3-16.

Agencies can also 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 on 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

Figure 3-16: Projected TDP Performance by Total Population and Low-Income Households in Service Area



Source: HART TDP, 2017

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 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 successfully, and have a real chance to impact the community. While this list of principles is not required in its entirety, the more elements 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.

- 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;

3.9 Plan Coordination & Implementation

New in this Section:

- *Coordination with Other Plans*
- *Benefits of Better Timing for Key Plans—COAs, L RTPs, TAM Plans, and TDSPs*
- *Case Study: Better Plan Coordination—Lee TDP & L RTP*

Creating the vision for transit and obtaining the approval of the decision-makers who approve the budget required to implement the TDP are really only the first steps 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.

Table 3-16: TDP Rule Requirement Vs. Best Practice

Plan Implementation & Coordination	Required	Preferred
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, local government comprehensive plans, and the local MPO's L RTP.



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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 planning fabric of the community and 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 desires.

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;
- Use of 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.

Building on TDP Efforts/ Relationships

If the agency has 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.

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

Ensuring Progress Beyond Adoption

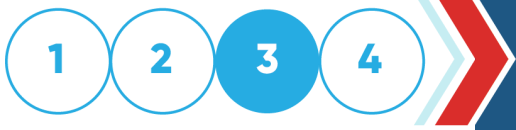


However the TDP is funded, transit agencies should do the following to build and maintain momentum during the implementation of the TDP recommendations after adoption:

- 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 have been described elsewhere in this document/section
- Ensure that the other local partners or entities involved or impacted are on board with, 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

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.

Coordination with Key Plans

A key part of the TDP development process is integrating other applicable plans and priorities 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 may include efforts in transit or other modal/mobility improvements directly related to transit, or even a study on affordable housing or on another applicable area that can impact transit. The TDP should build upon the recommendations and lessons from these plans to help further advance the community's goals and priorities for transit. Finally, the TDP should also highlight how other plans and priorities have influenced and changed the TDP analysis or decision-making processes.

LRTPs

Public transportation is an important component of any multimodal LRTP, which includes a transit needs assessment, an alternatives evaluation, and a transit cost affordable finance plan. MPO efforts in preparing the transit element of an LRTP can be coordinated with the transit agency and leverage the alternatives and recommendations from the most recent TDP major update.

Better timing and coordination of these plans can make the related analyses, outreach, and results far more valuable and productive for each plan. The following four scenarios represent the most common occurrences seen with TDP-LRTP timing.

- Scenario #1: TDP Major Update is completed and adopted a year prior to the LRTP adoption year
- Scenario #2: TDP Major Update is developed at same time as the LRTP, overlapping with some parts of the

The Best Promotional Tool



TDP Tips

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!

much lengthier LRTP schedule

- Scenario #3: TDP Major Update is completed right after adoption of the LRTP
- Scenario #4: TDP Major Update is completed 2-3 years after/before adoption of the LRTP

An agency preparing a TDP should work with its local MPO and FDOT District Office to ensure that its TDP and the MPO's LRTP are scheduled such that the TDP is completed the prior year or at least on the same schedule as the LRTP process (i.e., Scenarios #1 or #2) for the integration to be most meaningful. It is best to avoid Scenarios #3 or #4 as much as possible, where a TDP is completed either too early or too late for a meaningful integration of its short-term transit plan into the LRTP's long range transit element.

Figures 3-17 and 3-18 review Scenarios #1 and #2, respectively, more closely to provide TDP preparers additional information on the advantages and challenges of each. In addition, a hybrid scenario, as shown in Figure 3-19, also is developed for agencies to consider as a best practice, which combines the "best of both worlds" with regard to the key benefits from Scenarios #1 and #2.

However, selecting the right scenario for scheduling the timing of these plans is a local decision that may depend on many internal and regional factors. It likely will require the TDP preparer to coordinate early on with the local MPO and FDOT District Office to determine the best path.

Figure 3-17: TDP Major Update is Completed a Year Prior to LRTP Adoption



Advantages

- Provides agency ample time (including TDP time extensions, if needed) to develop its 10-year vision/needs that can feed into the long range vision process in coming year
- Allows regional partners, including FDOT and MPO, time to focus on one major planning effort at a time
- LRTP benefits from recently updated short-term transit plan

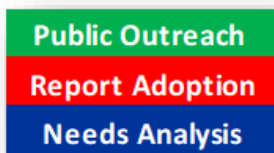
Challenges

- Little opportunity for resource sharing on public outreach and early data analyses

Figure 3-18: TDP Major Update is Completed in Same Year as LRTP Adoption



- If carefully coordinated, opportunity for cost savings with resource sharing in public outreach and early data analysis



- Extensive coordination needed if meaningful resource sharing in public outreach and other analysis is a goal
- Short-term transit needs in TDP are not available to be used as basis for developing long-term transit needs and/or needs-related model runs for LRTP
- Agency staffs may need to juggle planning efforts and review committee participation for two major processes
- Transit may get less attention when combined with LRTP at public workshops; transit-only surveys may be difficult to do

Figure 3-19: TDP Major Update Schedule Adjusted for Better Coordination & Cost Savings



- Short-term transit needs are available for LRTP use as basis for developing long-term needs and/or needs-related model runs
- Shared resources/cost savings feasible with second phase of TDP outreach overlapping with LRTP needs plan outreach
- TDP completed early, giving ample time to get through governing board adoption by September

- Agency staffs may need to juggle planning efforts and review committee participation for two major processes

* TDP still due in September, but agencies can submit them early, allowing more time for the FDOT approval process.

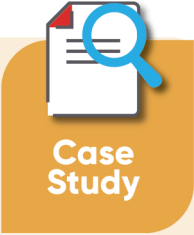
Comprehensive Operations Analysis

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 combined planning effort that includes a COA completed 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 over time. 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.

Even though the option of doing a full COA at the same time as a TDP major update is beneficial, it still is important to coordinate their timing appropriately. Though both of these key planning processes can be completed in conjunction with one another, the completion of the COA should occur earlier on in the TDP process to best

Example of Better Plan Coordination—Lee TDP-L RTP



In FDOT District 1, the Lee and Collier County urbanized areas meet and overlap the abutting counties. The Naples UZA enters into Lee County and the Cape Coral UZA goes into Collier County. Both MPOs in these counties are required to have their updated LRTPs completed and submitted every five years, most recently in 2015 and 2020. The Collier Area Transit (CAT) system happened to complete its initial TDP in 2000, so its due date has fallen in the same year as the Collier MPO's LRTP for several cycles. In Lee County, LeeTran's TDP has always followed the LRTP by one year, being due and submitted previously in 2011 and 2016.

Recognizing that these two plans can share resources/analyses and save funding, FDOT District 1 approached LeeTran to move its TDP up one year so that it would coincide with the Lee MPO LRTP. However, funding issues were a concern, as LeeTran's TDP funding would not be available until 2021.

FDOT assisted with the funding and the LeeTran TDP was completed the same year as the Lee MPO LRTP. The results were two LRTPs and two TDP major updates being completed simultaneously, sharing some planning resources and accommodating overall better plan coordination.

FDOT District 1 is now moving ahead to foster moving other TDPs in the District to be completed simultaneously with their local MPO LRTPs.



support the inclusion of its findings and recommendations at the appropriate stage of the 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.

While COAs also can be helpful if completed at some point before a transit agency is planning to undertake a TDP major update, any consideration for potentially timing the completion of a COA after a TDP major update is discouraged.

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.

TAM Plans

Additionally, a more recent requirement for transit agencies is the 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. Specifically, the first four years of a TDP's 10-year financial plan can be integrated into a TAM plan to reflect reasonable annual performance targets for each asset class. A TAM plan also can use a TDP's Cost Feasible Plan to determine which capital assets can be funded over the TAM plan horizon and which unfunded assets will be placed in a backlog.

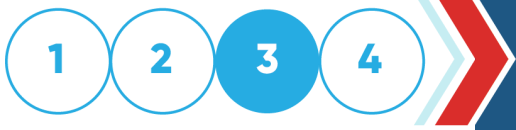
For consideration of timing, TAM plans are best done right before undertaking a TDP major update. They can still be helpful if they happen to coincide with the TDP process, but only as long as they can feed their input and recommendations into the TDP in time. As TAM plans are due in October, careful coordination may be necessary, but this can be worked out as a number of agencies have already done it successfully.

TDSPs

FDOT and the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged worked together to complete the *TDP & TDSP Coordination Guidance* report in December 2020, outlining many ways in which transit agencies and the CTCs and MPOs can complete many of the TDP and TDSP plan elements jointly or in a coordinated process.

The most opportune situation is when the transit agency is also the CTC. However, even when this is not the case, coordination with the local MPO/CTC on the timing of the TDSP and the efforts involved in producing it can foster TDP/TDSP synergy and improved results for both planning efforts. In addition, recommendations from the TDP/TDSP coordination study should also be reviewed to identify guidance for TDP preparers on which elements are most appropriate for coordinating with local TDSPs. Some TDP components, such as baseline data analysis and public outreach, may have the most potential for a shared effort.

Completing TDSPs before a TDP should be avoided, if possible. It is best for the TDSP if its preparation coincides with a TDP, as it is typically completed before September, when TDPs are due. Conducting a TDSP update right after a TDP can sometimes be helpful, especially when the same agency does both plans.



Informing Other Plans

Upon completion and adoption, among its many other functions, the TDP serves to document how the transit 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 Work Program, and to the local 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.

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 will have an impact on the recommendations. Therefore, preserving public support, funding, and operational support are all 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.

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 transit 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 APR. Through the TDP and subsequent APRs, needed transit services and actions can be reiterated and prioritized for the life of the TDP.

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.



ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

WHAT'S NEW?

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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 the September 1st deadline.

Clarity on Progress Report Expectations

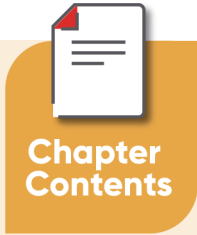
Over the years, this update has taken many forms and included various levels of detail, often varying in length from a few pages to an excessively large document. The TDP Rule defines only what the annual progress update must include, at a minimum, and provides little guidance on the standard format. 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 reviewers 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.

As with the TDP major updates, reviewers often provide comments that generally can be classified into one of two primary categories. The first category includes comments that are intended to address items that are currently in non-compliance with the rules governing the TDP process. In this case, all of the comments would need to be addressed and resolved before approval of the annual progress update could be granted by the FDOT reviewer.

The second category is much different in that its

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comments generally stray from rules compliance. Instead, these comments involve changes to items based on the reviewer’s interpretation of rules, often reflecting some personal preference for how something should be done. These can range from suggestions that may help improve the plan or planning process, to comments that may be technical in nature, to direction that may simply change the look or aesthetics of the plan document. Sometimes, these comments may just be related to the reviewer’s desire to include some best practice ideas or new concepts learned from other experiences into the document in question. Regardless of intent, the transit agency or preparer should review these types of comments and decide whether to revise the annual progress update or leave them for consideration in the next one, or even for the next major update.

While it is the goal of the FDOT Public 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 updated to foster and guide the annual progress update process required of all transit systems in Florida.

4.2 Objectives

Progress Update to the TDP

The progress update 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:

- Clearly stating what the actual reporting period is in the title of the APR;

- Providing a check-in on the progress made during that period;
- 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 (GOPs).

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	<u>Plan that requires public outreach</u>
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	

While the 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.

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 APR preparation, 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 adjacent TDP Tips, 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.



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.*

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.

4.4 Required APR 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

Annual Progress Report

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

TDP Annual Progress Report	Required	Preferred
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	●	

*This shows past year's accomplishments compared to the original implementation program.

**This includes an 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.

Note #1: The revised implementation plan should show current status of the elements included in the original TDP implementation plan with revisions, if any, made to it. This includes the revised list of funded and unfunded projects or services needed to meet the goals and objectives.

Note #2: The revised financial plan should show costs and revenues for the new tenth year of the revised implementation plan.

discussion on recommended formatting. On the next page, Table 4-2 provides a quick reference guide of the required versus best practice components of an APR.

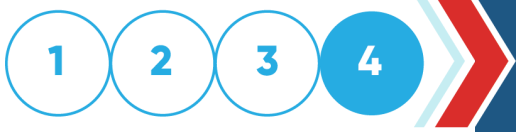
A. Last year's accomplishments compared to the original implementation program

A direct comparison should be drawn between the actual

progress on the service and capital projects that were stipulated to start or be completed 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 be completed during the prior year, either as a bulleted

Figure 4-1: Previous Year Accomplishments/Progress—Example

Route	TDP Major Update Improvement	Progress	Notes
14	Realign to Cypress Creek Tri-Rail Station	Not Completed	Extension on-hold until station-area and access re-design/construction completed.
28	Weekday peak service 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 to 20 min.	Complete	Service started in April this year.
60	Weekday Peak/Midday service to 20 min.	Complete	Service started in April this year.
62	Realign to Cypress Creek Tri-Rail Station	Not Completed	Extension on-hold until station-area and access re-design/construction completed.



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 bullets or 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. It also is important to report this prior year progress information in a user-friendly manner

so that it clearly identifies any cumulative progress made overall separate from the progress made in just the previous year.

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 4-2: TDP Goals, Objectives, and Policy Assessment—Example

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 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. That paragraph also may be used to discuss revisions for all years and the new tenth year, as well.

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

TDP Major Update Improvement	Funding Status	Implementation Status	Notes
Service			
Charlotte Link-On-Demand—App-based service with designated anchor points at major activity centers in western portion of county service area	Funded in 2024	On track for implementation	Aforementioned infrastructure to support Enhanced Dial-A-Ride also will support this service
Babcock Express—Express route service from downtown Punta Gorda to Babcock Ranch area	Unfunded	Deferred	Previously assumed funding no longer available; no new funding identified at this time
US-41/Airport Connector—Service that connects Punta Gorda Airport and Port Charlotte Town Center; would also serve major activity centers	Unfunded	Deferred	Previously assumed funding no longer available; no new funding identified at this time
Downtown Circulator—Connects residents and visitors in downtown Punta Gorda area and Sunseeker Resort area across US-41 bridge	Unfunded	Remains unfunded	No new funding identified
Beach Circulator—Links Englewood Public Library to western coastline area	Unfunded	Remains unfunded	No new funding identified
Capital/Infrastructure/Technology/Policy			
Bus Stop Infrastructure Program	Funded in 2022–31	Ongoing	Planned bus stop signs and benches to be built concurrently to support new services
Marketing/Awareness Campaign	Funded in 2022–31	Ongoing	Participated in appropriate virtual outreach
Real-time bus locator app and reservation technology upgrades	Funded in 2022–31	Progress made	Will be implemented with new services
New Administration and Operations facility	Funded in 2022–31	Ongoing	Construction began Spring 2021; ongoing
Employee Bus Pass/Subsidy Programs	n/a	On hold	CCT services are currently fare-free due to the pandemic



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 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 then 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 and/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.

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

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											
Replacement Vehicles - Buses (Section 5310)	\$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 - 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)	\$0
Surplus/(Shortfall)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,368	\$72,091	\$35,073	(\$4,907)	(\$48,086)	(\$48,086)

New 10th Year

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.

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 objectives.

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

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 the next 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.

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



Public Involvement

Although no formal public involvement process is specified for APRs, as a best practice, transit agencies also are encouraged to conduct some level of public outreach during the APR development process, depending on the magnitude of the proposed service changes identified in the TDP 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 TDP major update, an opportunity for public involvement is prudent and 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 process. 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.

4.6 Coordinating with the MPO

While involvement of and coordination with the local MPO is required for a TDP major update, most APRs are completed with minimal interaction with the MPO due to the limited scale of the process and the nature of its required elements as a progress report.

However, as TDP recommendations feed directly into the MPO planning process, thus allowing for seamless integration of transit projects into the LRTP, transit agencies should consider coordinating with their local MPOs even during the interim years of TDP major updates when updating their APRs. Just as FDOT is updated every interim year on the progress of the TDP implementation

Keep Your MPO In the Loop



- Consider coordinating with your local MPOs during the development of your APRs, especially when the local MPO is developing its LRTP or if the transit agency plans a major change to its current or future network during that interim year.
- Just as FDOT is updated every interim year on the progress of the TDP implementation plan via the APR, the local MPO also is an important strategic partner that should be kept “in the loop.”

plan via the APR, the local MPO also is an important strategic partner that should be kept “in the loop.”

It is important to note that this interim year coordination is especially critical when the local MPO is in the process of developing its LRTP that year, or if the transit agency plans a major change to its current or future network during that interim year.

4.7 FDOT Approval Process

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

PART II

FDOT Guidance for Reviewing Transit Development Plans



TDP REVIEWER'S GUIDE

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1.1 Introduction

The purpose of the Reviewer’s Guide is to provide the FDOT District Offices with general information and guidance that will assist staff with their review of TDP major updates and APR submittals.

1.2 Coordination with Agencies

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

At the Outset of a 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 a Project Review Committee (PRC), if considered by the preparing agency to guide the TDP, should include a representative from FDOT.

During the TDP

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 agencies 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.

Post-Submittal Coordination

Continuing the open channel of communication with the preparing agency beyond its TDP submittal, especially during a major update cycle, can help the preparer’s

efforts to implement the plan that was just approved. Rather than waiting a year until an APR is submitted to identify a missed opportunity or an issue, such post-submittal coordination would allow FDOT District Office staff to continue to work with the preparing agency to implement the adopted and approved TDP.

FDOT may also want agencies to stay supportive of some projects with regional significance included in the TDP, so ongoing interaction makes sense in this regard, as well. Because of the value of this post-submittal coordination, the last update of the TDP Handbook added steps that agencies should take to ensure that they continue to coordinate with partner agencies between TDP cycles. And, as they reach out to seek the support of their most valuable regional partner, FDOT also should meet them in the middle to keep this agency-FDOT alliance strong for a better connected region.

1.3 FDOT Approvals

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 preparing a TDP major update, as well as generally when they must occur in the overall flow of the process.

PIP Approval

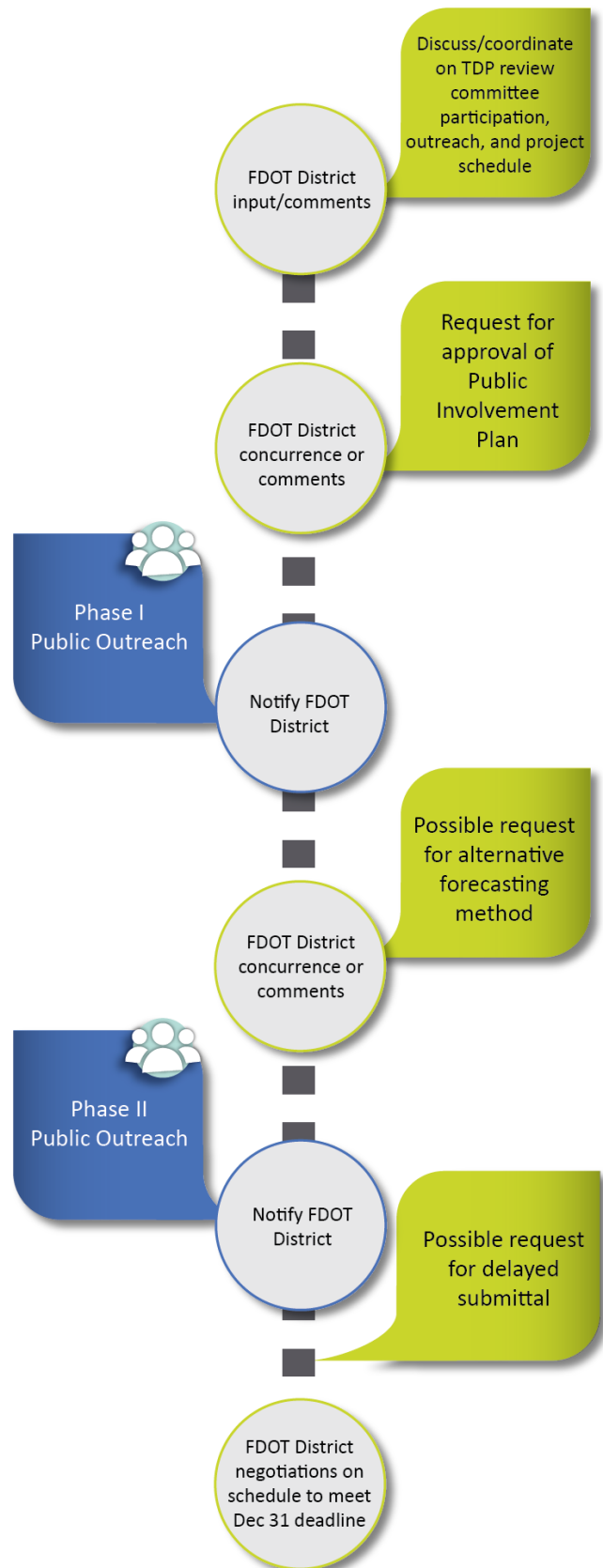
One of the first items of a TDP major update that is reviewed and approved by FDOT is the PIP, which outlines the planned public engagement process for the TDP. While agencies may provide PIPs with varying levels and types of planned activities for their outreach processes, the TDP Rule guides FDOT reviewers on what must be included for them to be able to approve a PIP for compliance. Figure 1-2 lists the components required for a PIP's approval by FDOT.

However, it is important to recognize that project parameters can change. Unforeseen events, ranging from a local issue to a global pandemic, can impact these plans. While the PIP requirements must still be met, the avenues to achieve them may deviate from the original PIP and should be allowed, as long as the changes do not reflect a significant reduction in the outreach scale and/or quality originally intended by the agency.

PIP Approval Timeline

Currently, no timeline has been set by FDOT for submitting a PIP and, therefore, agencies do not have clear guidance on when to submit a PIP once they get

Figure 1-1: Communication with FDOT



started on a TDP major update. (Note: APRs do not require PIPs. However, if a significant change to the system or its operating environment has occurred and the agency has decided to do some public outreach as part of a larger-scale APR, a brief PIP is recommended. If one does get prepared, since it is still part of an APR, no FDOT review or approval is necessary.) Similarly, FDOT reviewers also do not have clear guidance on a PIP approval timeline and, therefore, are not limited by a set timeframe for a PIP’s review and approval.

To remedy this issue, a five-to-eight week PIP submittal-to-approval timeline is recommended, as shown in Figure 1-3. With this preferred timeline, agencies should submit their PIPs to FDOT no later than three weeks after they officially initiate a TDP major update. FDOT then would have two weeks to approve it, either with or without comments. If the PIP does not meet the minimum requirements, as identified in Figure 1-2, then it will be returned to the preparing agency with comments, allowing two weeks to

PIPs—Must-Have Items Checklist



- Provides brief descriptions of each public involvement activity planned.
- Indicates how comments from regional workforce board will be solicited.
- Shows how agency plans to inform FDOT, regional workforce board, and MPO on all public meetings.
- Shows how agency will provide opportunities for FDOT, regional workforce board, and MPO to review the TDP and comment.

address the comments and resubmit. FDOT should provide a final approval of the resubmittal within one week after receipt, or repeat the same process until the PIP is approved.

Figure 1-2: Elements Required for PIP Approval



Provides **brief descriptions of each public involvement activity planned** in early and later phases of the TDP. A tentative schedule of events and details of anticipated participants/stakeholders are preferable but not necessary.



Clearly **indicates how comments from the RWB will be solicited**. Inviting and involving the RWB in a PRC is preferable. At a minimum, the preparing agency must indicate how it will provide the RWB a specific avenue (e.g., via email, phone, or stakeholder interviews) to provide comments.

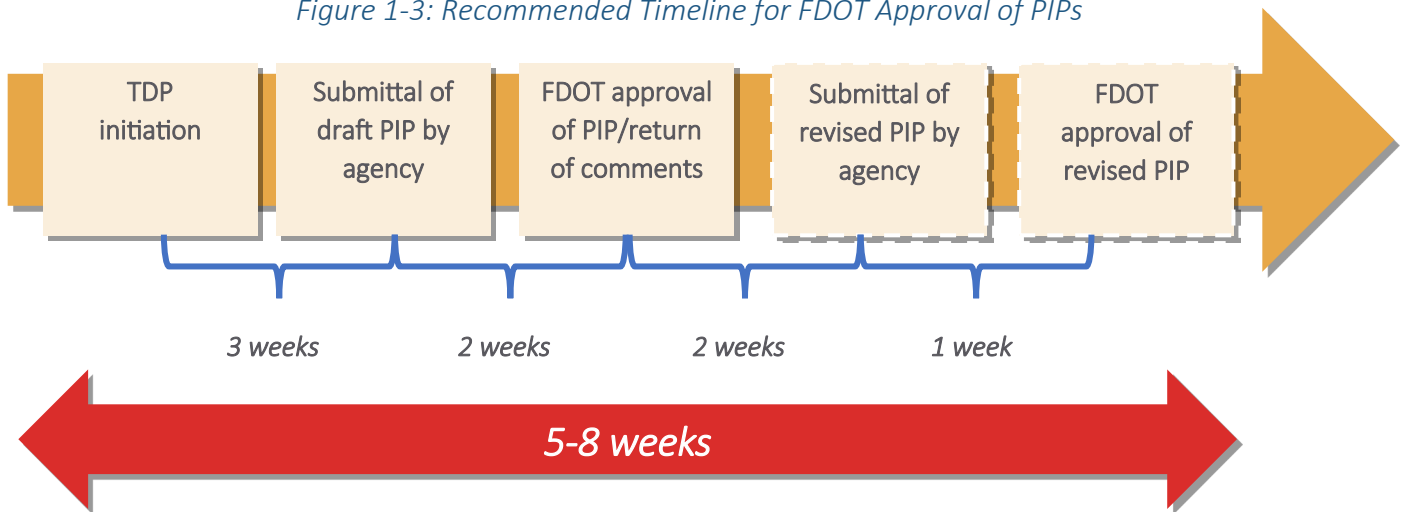


Shows **how the agency plans to inform FDOT, RWB, and MPO** about all public meetings. This may include the preparing agency inviting and involving these agencies in a PRC and/or simply notifying them about the planned schedule for TDP public meetings via email.



Shows **how the agency plans to provide opportunities for FDOT, RWB, and MPO** to review and comment on the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program. This may include involving the agencies in a PRC and providing this information as part of the PRC meetings and/or simply sharing applicable technical memoranda or the draft TDP via email.

Figure 1-3: Recommended Timeline for FDOT Approval of PIPs



Since PIP submittal-to-approval should take approximately five to eight weeks in most cases, given the recommended timeline, agencies should be encouraged to continue to plan and schedule TDP-related outreach during this time. Scheduling and/or holding minor events, such as review meetings or stakeholder interviews, should be allowed so that schedules can be maintained. However, major public outreach efforts, such as public workshops, should not be held until after FDOT approves the PIP.

Using MPO PPP instead of a PIP

While most agencies tend to develop their own TDP-specific PIPs, for which guidance on preparation and review (as discussed herein) should be clear, they do have another option. The current TDP Rule allows an agency preparing a TDP major update to use its local MPO's PPP instead of preparing a separate TDP-specific PIP. Unfortunately, other than stating that a PIP can be replaced by a properly-adopted PPP, the TDP Rule does not specify any additional guidance in this regard. However, as MPO PPPs are considered "pre-approved" by FDOT due to their FHWA/FTA-required approval process, TDP preparers are not required to submit PPPs to FDOT for approval again. However, when reviewing a TDP that has used a PPP instead of a PIP, FDOT reviewers must ensure that TDP still meets the same requirements shown in Figure 1-2.

TDP Submittals & Approvals

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.

Prior to submitting a TDP major update for review, the block grant recipient's governing board must approve/adopt the TDP, regardless of who prepares it. However, such approvals are not required for APRs, but are considered a best practice.

1.4 FDOT Review

Review Process

The review period for an initial TDP is 60 days per the Rule, and 30 days for APRs. District Office staff 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 preparing 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 subsequent governing board approval.

Review Timeline

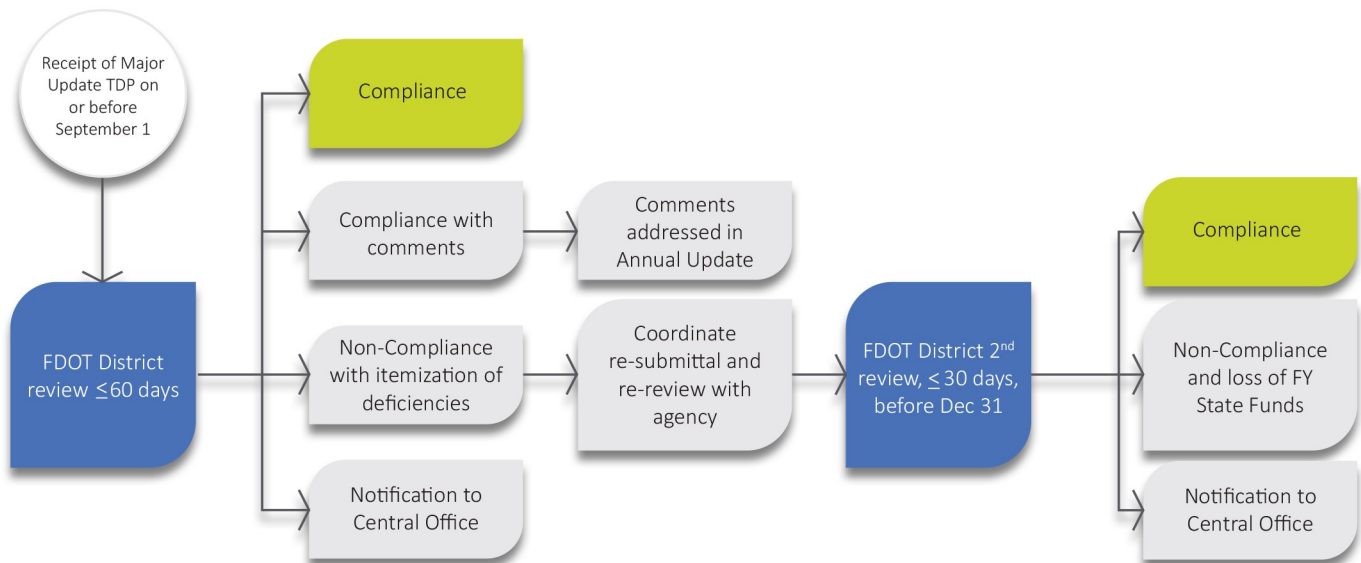
The TDP Rule establishes review timeframes and steps: September 1-October 31 is FDOT’s initial review period; November is the transit agency’s time to respond and rewrite items that were deemed non-compliant; and December is for FDOT’s second review (re-review) of a corrected TDP or specific elements, as appropriate. This schedule, as shown in Figure 1-4, 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 deadline and it is in the discretion of the FDOT District Office whether or not to grant the extension.

1.5 Rule Compliance

TDP Major Updates

The TDP Rule calls for a number of specific elements that must be addressed in the development of a TDP. The information provided herein is intended to aid FDOT

Figure 1-4: FDOT Submittal and Review Process for TDPs





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.

Reviewer's Checklists for TDP Major Updates

Tables 1-1 through 1-5 provide checklists for key TDP components that are required under the current TDP Rule. These "Required" components must be included to ensure

FDOT approval of a TDP major update. In addition, components that are "Preferred" by FDOT for inclusion in a TDP also are presented. While every effort has been made in these checklists to identify the various elements of the key components that are required for approval versus the elements that are simply preferred, the reviewers at FDOT District Offices have the primary responsibility to determine compliance with the Rule. As such, it must be recognized that ultimate compliance will be determined based on *only* the "Required" elements outlined in the

Table 1-1: Public Involvement Process Checklist

Public Involvement Process	Required 	Preferred 
FDOT-approved TDP Public Involvement Plan (PIP)*	<input type="radio"/>	
TDP Project Review Committee including FDOT, RWB, and MPO		<input type="radio"/>
TDP visioning with elected officials/boards		<input type="radio"/>
14-day advance notification for events open to the public		<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities for public involvement outlined in PIP	<input type="radio"/>	
Solicitation of comments from RWB	<input type="radio"/>	
Notification to FDOT, RWB, and MPO about public meetings**	<input type="radio"/>	
Provision of review opportunities to FDOT, RWB, and MPO***	<input type="radio"/>	
Pre-TDP outreach and post-adoption public outreach		<input type="radio"/>

*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, RWB, and MPO of all public meetings where the TDP is to be presented or discussed.

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

Review Notes:

1. The PIP should be approved within 5-8 weeks from receiving it. FDOT District Office staff should review the PIP to ensure it includes all the necessary elements contained in the Rule and is consistent with the Rule.
2. See PIP Approval section in this Reviewer's Guide for a list of items required for FDOT approval of a PIP.

Table 1-2: Situation Appraisal Checklist

Situation Appraisal	 Required	 Preferred
Plans and policy review	○	
Socioeconomic trends	○	
Travel behavior/patterns		○
Land use	○	
Community feedback		○
Organizational issues	○	
Technology/innovation	○	
Regional coordination		○
Safety and State of Good Repair		○
Funding		○
Transit-friendly land use and urban design efforts	○	
10-Year transit ridership projections*	○	

*This can be included with the overall demand assessment section of the TDP.

Review Notes:

The overall TDP should include all required elements of a TDP Situation Appraisal that:

1. Provides sufficient documentation of the efforts to demonstrate that the transit agency fully evaluated the strategic context in which it currently operates and that which is likely to develop during the plan period.
2. Discusses 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.
3. Includes an assessment of the extent to which the land use and urban design patterns in the agency’s service area support or hinder the efficient provision of transit service, including any efforts being undertaken by the agency or local land use authorities to foster a more transit-friendly operating environment.
4. Is consistent with the Florida Transportation Plan, local government comprehensive plans, the local MPO’s long-range transportation plan, and regional transportation goals and objectives.
5. Documents the demand estimation for future transit ridership either using TBEST or an approved alternate ridership forecasting technique.
6. Documents a performance assessment of existing service that typically includes peer review and trend analyses using NTD data, as well as results from any surveys conducted.

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

Agency Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives	 Required	 Preferred
Mission and vision	○	
Goals and objectives	○	
Guiding principles		○
Integration of safety and State of Good Repair targets		○
Provision of opportunities for FDOT, RWB, and MPO to review and	○	
<p>Review Notes:</p> <p>1. The transit agency must provide sufficient documentation of its vision, mission, goals, and objectives. Goals and objectives should align with the overall vision and mission of the agency. The situation appraisal should serve as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives.</p>		

Table 1-4: Alternatives Development & Evaluation Checklist





Alternatives Development & Evaluation	 Required	 Preferred
Documentation of development of transit alternatives	○	
Provision of opportunities for FDOT, RWB, and MPO to review and comment	○	
Provision of opportunities for general public to review and comment		○
Documentation of evaluation of transit alternatives	○	
<p>Review Notes:</p> <p>1. The TDP must provide evidence of the development and evaluation of various transit improvement alternatives. This could include different levels of service, different route configurations, and/or different mode investments, among other potential improvements.</p>		

Table 1-5: 10-Year Implementation Plan Checklist

10-Year Implementation Plan	 Required	 Preferred
10-year program of improvement strategies and policies	<input type="radio"/>	
Maps indicating areas to be served and types and levels of service	<input type="radio"/>	
10-year financial plan showing funding sources and expenditures of funds	<input type="radio"/>	
Provision of opportunities for FDOT, RWB, and MPO to review and comment	<input type="radio"/>	
Provision of opportunities for general public to review and comment		<input type="radio"/>
Documentation of monitoring program to track performance*	<input type="radio"/>	
Marketing program		<input type="radio"/>
Implementation plan with projects and/or services needed to meet the goals and objectives in the TDP	<input type="radio"/>	
List of unfunded needs	<input type="radio"/>	

*This can be included as an appendix to the TDP.

Review Notes:

1. It is recommended that the financial plan make use of the spreadsheet template provided as part of the TDP guidance.
2. For the reporting period (calendar year vs. fiscal year), the TDP should use the same fiscal year cycle as the transit agency and should report the financial plan years in fiscal years.
3. The costs in TDPs are recommended to be shown in Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars. The YOE dollars are dollars that are adjusted for inflation from the present time.
4. The implementation plan should include the name of the TDP improvement, year of implementation, annual operating and initial capital cost data (if applicable/available), anticipated revenue source(s), and the TDP goal(s)/objective(s) that the improvement is intended to support.

checklists. While the elements noted as “Preferred” are indeed best practices and recommended, they are *not* required for the approval of a TDP. As needed, the tables can be used as a communication tool with agencies and may be adapted to each FDOT District Office’s preferred format.

Annual Progress Reports

An APR is intended to be a progress report on the implementation plan of the adopted 10-year TDP major

update. It is intended to be a comparison of actual events in relation to the original plan and an assessment of how to address any changes between prior year events and the plan. It also is supposed to include the addition of a new tenth year to maintain the planned outlook for the next decade.










It also should include adjustments to intervening years to reflect any changes in expectations or conditions. Updates to new local, State, or Federal legislation and revenue

expectations, new technologies, changes in local transportation and land use plans, and other related items also should be considered in the APR. A revised financial plan also should be provided. The APR also may respond to and address any comments provided by FDOT staff previously on the approved major update.

Review Checklist for APRs

Table 1-6 provides a checklist of components that are required for APRs under the current TDP Rule. These "Required" components must be included in the APRs for compliance and FDOT approval. Also included in the table are components that are identified as "Preferred." While not required for compliance, these items are suggested best practices for inclusion.

Table 1-6: TDP Annual Progress Report Checklist

10-Year Implementation Plan	Required 	Preferred 
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		

*This shows past year's accomplishments compared to the original implementation program.

**This includes an analysis of any discrepancies between the plan and its implementation for the past year, as well as steps that will be taken to attain the original goals and objectives.

Review Notes:

1. The revised implementation plan should show current status of the elements included in the original TDP implementation plan with revisions, if any, made to it. This includes the revised list of funded and unfunded projects or services needed to meet the goals and objectives.
2. The revised financial plan should show costs and revenues for the new tenth year of the revised implementation plan.

Supplemental Checklists/Non-Compliance Responses

In addition to the checklists provided previously, FDOT reviewers also can utilize the supplemental checklists in Tables 1-7 and 1-8, if they wish to provide an agency any specific responses on the required elements. These supplemental checklists may also be useful if there are multiple items that are not in compliance and the FDOT reviewer wishes to provide comments on each to assist the transit agency with remedying them. (Any comments not specifically outlining noncompliance with these requirements, may or may not be addressed by the agency.) Therefore, depending on the nature and scale of the responses, the reviewer may determine the best use of these checklists.

Consistency with FDOT Priorities & Emphasis Areas

Responding to FDOT priorities and emphasis areas in the most recent FTP or that are intrinsic to other State initiatives is important to FDOT so it can guide a transit system's development at the same time it is supporting regional and State mobility goals and needs. However, addressing them in a TDP is only a best practice at this time and it is not required for approval. Nevertheless, transit agencies are and should continue to be encouraged to identify these priorities and emphasis areas and incorporate them where and when applicable.

Approving Submittals—Common Issues

Issues related to TDP and/or APR reviews and approvals may arise from time to time and some are worth noting herein. While a majority of the issues are typically related to schedule/timing, which usually are resolved by FDOT granting extensions to complete those TDPs, others may not have clear cut remedies and may need further assistance or understanding from FDOT. For example, some transit agencies face limitations on the scope of their TDP efforts due to agency size, staffing issues, and/or budget scale and may not be in a position to deliver on a large-scale PIP or wide-ranging data analysis. Another issue may involve a transit agency getting impacted by a unique requirement by its governing board for a public comment period (for which it was not aware nor is it required under TDP Rule) for any plans that it approves, thus making the agency miss the required September 1 TDP submittal deadline by a few weeks. Similarly, it is sometimes the case that misunderstandings and/or misinterpretations regarding an agency's intentions or concerning FDOT review responses may occur.

As part of its exemplary national model with a well-defined and successfully implemented TDP process, FDOT's TDP review process and its District Office reviewers have done a commendable job assisting Florida's transit agencies

every year, helping to resolve these and many other issues in order to ensure that they receive the Block Grant funding to which the successful completion and approval of their TDPs are tied.

With its *One FDOT, One Team* policy going forward, FDOT reviewers should continue this much needed assistance. They also should be sure to seek compliance in the TDP/APR process while also striving to do so in a helpful and understanding way that will bolster and encourage their transit agency partners who are slowly moving out of a global pandemic and still trying to figure out what the "new normal" for transit will look like in the near future.

TDP Reviewer's Guide

Table 1-7: TDP Requirements—Compliance Checklist

TDP Compliance Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	If No, reasons for non-compliance	Comments/Suggestions
Public Participation Process			
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			
Situation Appraisal			
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 analyses using NTD data, as well as various surveys conducted			
Agency Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives			
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, MPO, decision-makers, and the regional workforce board an opportunity to review and comment			
Alternatives Development & Evaluation			
Documents development and evaluation of transit alternatives			
Provides FDOT, MPO, decision-makers, and the regional workforce board an opportunity to review and comment			

Table 1-7: TDP Requirements—Compliance Checklist (Continued)

TDP Compliance Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	If No, reasons for non-compliance	Comments/Suggestions
10-Year Implementation Plan			
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			
Provides list of unfunded needs			
Provides a farebox recovery summary report as an appendix			
Provides FDOT, MPO, decision-makers, and the regional workforce board an opportunity to review and comment			

Table 1-8: TDP Annual Progress Report Requirements—Compliance Checklist

APR Compliance Review Item	Compliant (Y/N)	If No, reasons for non-compliance	Comments/Suggestions
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			
Revised financial plan			
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.

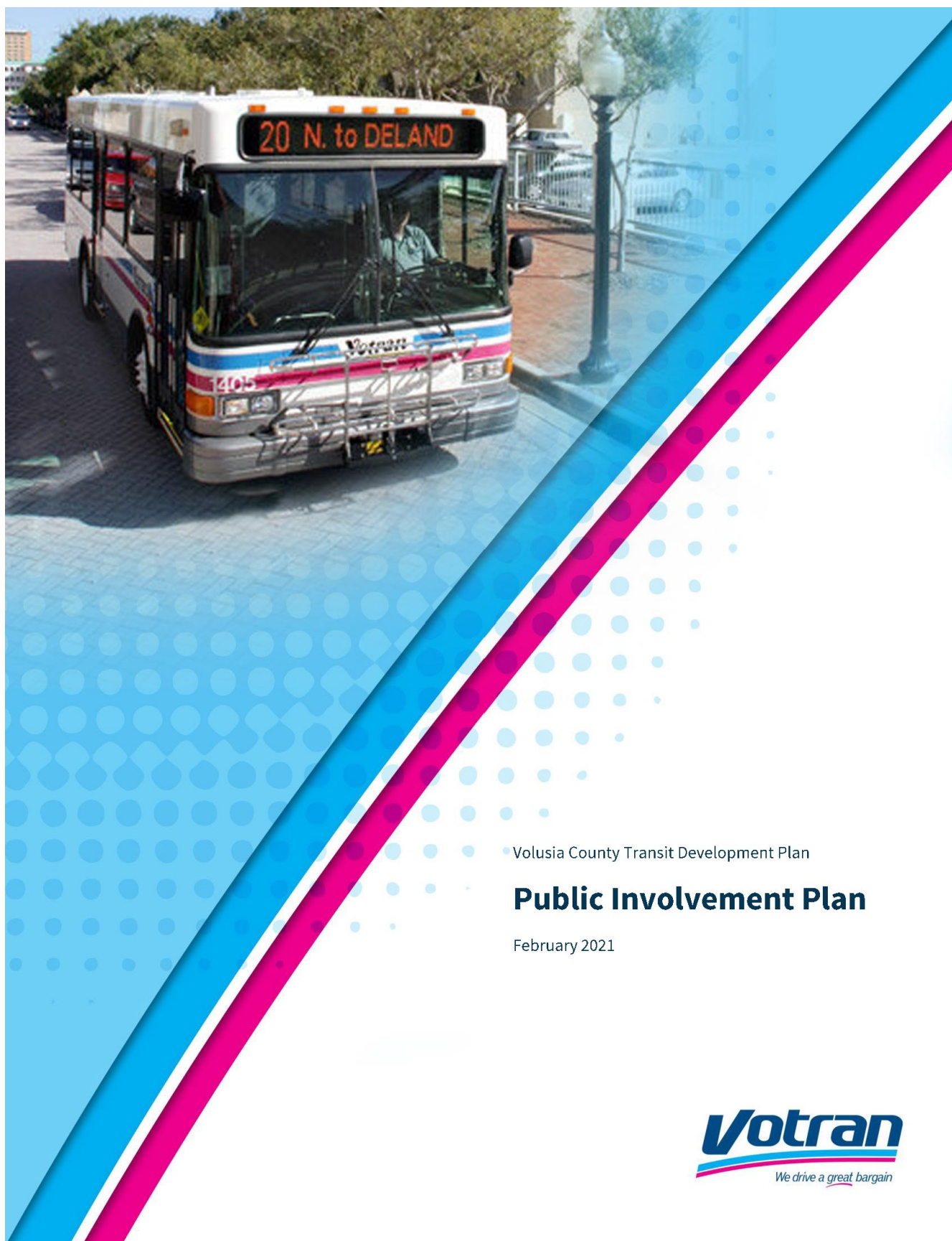
Rulemaking Authority 334.044(2), 341.041(12)(b) FS. Law Implemented 341.041, 341.051, 341.052, 341.071 FS. History—New 9-24-75, Formerly 14-73.01, Amended 12-8-92, 2-20-07.

APPENDIX

B

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MATERIAL





Volusia County Transit Development Plan

Public Involvement Plan

February 2021





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1. Introduction

Votran, the transit agency serving Volusia County, is preparing its 10-year Transit Development Plan (TDP), which will provide a guide for development of the transit system over the next decade. As required by State statute, this is a major update to its TDP, which is required every five years. This update covers Fiscal Years (FYs) 2022 through 2031.

The TDP Public Involvement Plan (PIP) provides an overview of the public outreach activities that will be undertaken as part of the Votran TDP update process. The PIP is designed to comply with TDP State statutory requirements and is consistent with the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (R2CTPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP).

Rule 14-73.001 requires that the TDP preparation include the following activities:

- A PIP approved by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) or the local TPO's PPP, approved by both the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- Description of the process used and the public involvement activities undertaken.
- Solicitation of comments from FDOT, the TPO, and the regional Workforce Development Board (i.e., CareerSource Flagler/Volusia) on the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program.
- Notification of all public meetings at which the TDP is presented to or discussed with FDOT, the TPO, and the regional Workforce Development Board.

To ensure that Votran meets these requirements, the PIP will facilitate a public involvement process for the TDP effort that will encompass a range of activities that provide ample opportunity for participation by the required, and other interested, entities.

It should be noted that the PIP is written such as to match the scope of services and to provide the greatest flexibility possible as the TDP is being developed. While the activities are set, the exact time frame and types or number of activities are subject to change in order for the local agency to accomplish the best results with the resources made available for this aspect of the update process.

Furthermore, Votran as a public transit agency and recipient of federal and state funding, is required to adhere to federal non-discrimination regulations, including those outlined in Title VI. Volusia County has developed and maintains a Title VI Plan, outlining the policies, procedures, services, and steps that will guide the public involvement activities outlined in this PIP to ensure inclusive and representative participation, including those with disabilities, limited English proficiency (LEP), and/or other factors that may limit their participation. By reference, this PIP integrates the policies and procedures of the Title VI Plan into the programs, activities, and services of this PIP.



2. TDP Public Involvement Process

A variety of public involvement techniques were selected for inclusion in the PIP to ensure the active participation of citizens in the community. Table 2-1 presents the types of activities that will be completed for the TDP and the tools associated with each type of activity.

Table 2-1: TDP Public Involvement Activities

Public Involvement Activity		Votran TDP PIP
Collateral Materials and Visual Aids	Fact sheets, flyers, and other informational items	✓
	Web outreach	✓
	Social media and email outreach	✓
Community Engagement, Review, and Comment	Online surveys	✓
	Bus passenger survey	✓
	Public workshops	✓
	Stakeholder interviews	✓
	Discussion group workshops	✓
	Email, in-person, and telephone comments	✓
Agency Coordination	Steering/review committee	✓
	Regional coordination	✓
	Federal, state, and local officials	✓

The remainder of this section summarizes these activities in detail, using direct and direct public involvement techniques to ensure active participation from the community.

Efforts will also be made to gather input from individuals with limited English proficiency in Volusia County. To the extent possible, the project team will make Spanish-speaking individuals available to assist with public outreach events and/or provide pertinent materials such as surveys and workshop flyers in Spanish.

Impacts of COVID-19 Health Guidelines on the PIP

It should be noted that, due to social distancing requirements and safety precautions resulting from the COVID-19-related public health crisis unfolding at this time, some outreach activities may be conducted virtually via the internet and/or phone. However, the ongoing need for such outreach strategies will be reassessed over time and efforts will be made to ensure the use of an array of online platforms that will provide easy and equitable methods for reaching all segments of the population and receiving feedback.



3. TDP Public Involvement Activities

Table 3-1 provides a list of planned outreach activities for this TDP Major Update. Each activity is described in detail thereafter.

Table 3-1: Public Involvement Activities

Type of Outreach Activity	Phase I (October 2020–January 2021)	Phase II (February–August 2021)
Review Committee Meetings	✓	✓
Stakeholder Interviews	✓	
Bus Passenger Survey	✓	
Online Surveys	✓	✓
Discussion Group Workshops	✓	
Public Workshops	✓	✓
Web/Email/Social and Printed Media	✓	✓

Project Review Committee Meetings

As one of the initial outreach tasks for the TDP, a Project Review Committee (PRC) was assembled. The PRC will support and help guide the overall TDP effort, including serving as a technical resource for data and information. Members include representatives from Volusia County/Votran, FDOT District 5, R2CTPO, and CareerSource Flagler/Volusia, which is the Workforce Development Board of Flagler and Volusia counties. Table 3-2 presents a list of the PRC members and their affiliations and contact information.

Immediately after convening the group, an initial project kick-off meeting was hosted in October 2020 to set the overall scope, goals and objectives, and desired deliverables for the TDP process. Up to three additional meetings with the PRC are envisioned at key technical milestones, as follows:

- January 2021 – Provide initial outreach findings and conduct a transit needs discussion
- March 2021 – Present Draft COA and TDP Needs Plan
- Jun/July 2021 – Present Draft TDP and TDSP





Table 3-2: Project Review Committee Members

PRC Member	Organization	Contact Information
Bobbie King	Volusia County	bgking@volusia.org
Dona Butler	Volusia County	DDbutler@volusia.org
Suzanne Konchan	Volusia County	skonchan@volusia.org
Roger Wittenberg	Volusia County	rwittenberg@volusia.org
Matthew Minaberry	Votran	mminaberry@volusia.org
Kelvin Miller	Votran	kmiller@volusia.org
Jacob Lunceford	Votran	jlunceford@volusia.org
Elizabeth Suchsland	Votran	esuchsland@volusia.org
Stephan Harris	R2CTPO	SHarris@r2ctpo.org
Diane Poitras	FDOT District 5	Diane.poitras@dot.state.fl.us
Carlos Colon	FDOT District 5	carlos.colon@dot.state.fl.us
Kathy Spencer	Career Source Flagler Volusia	kathyspencer@careersourcefv.com

Stakeholder Interviews

Since the understanding of local conditions should include knowledge of the perceptions and attitudes of community decision-makers and leaders towards transit, up to 15 stakeholder interviews will be conducted as part of the public involvement process. Stakeholders will be identified with input and guidance from the PRC. Interviews will then be scheduled and conducted using an interview script that was developed and submitted to the PRC for review at the project kickoff. Unless requested to be in-person, these stakeholder interviews will be conducted virtually via online meeting platforms or via telephone. Organizations associated with the selected stakeholders are listed in Table 3-3.



15 Interviews: Oct – Nov 2020



Table 3-3: Stakeholder Organizations

Organization	Stakeholder Category
River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization	Regional Planning Agency
Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board	Local Board
Volusia County Council	County Department
Volusia County Health Department	
Volusia County Administration	
Council on Aging	Social Service Agency
One Voice Volusia	
United Way Volusia/Flagler	
Town of Pierson	City/Municipality
City of Daytona Beach	
City of Daytona Beach Shores	
City of DeBary	
City of DeLand	
City of Deltona	
City of Edgewater	
City of Holly Hill	
City of Lake Helen	
City of New Smyrna Beach	
City of Oak Hill	
City of Orange City	
City of Ormond Beach	
City of South Daytona	

Bus Passenger Survey

A bus passenger survey of Votran’s scheduled fixed-route bus trips will also be conducted to obtain information related to the attitudes, preferences, and habits of current riders. The bus passenger survey methodology and implementation will be coordinated closely with Votran staff to ensure that study objectives are met and data collection efforts are efficiently integrated with Votran operations. In addition, the survey form will be developed in conjunction with the PRC and will draw on Votran’s most recent survey questionnaire to promote consistency of questions and response cohorts. This will facilitate subsequent comparative analysis of results over time. Prior to beginning the bus passenger survey process, a meeting with Votran operations staff will be held to ensure a clear understanding of the methodology, process, and timeframe. Survey notices will be provided for Votran to distribute to its bus operators and on board its buses to notify patrons of the survey.

The project team will use electronic tablets to facilitate the collection of data during a survey interview process on board the vehicles. Once approved, the questionnaire will be programmed as an easy-to-use survey application and will step the patron through the questions with directed branching



geared to account for prior responses. Collection of origin-destination information through the electronic tablets and interview process will increase the number of valid, accurate, and geocodable responses from bus riders.

The bus passenger survey is expected to cover a sample of all routes and runs for all times of day for a representative weekday, Saturday, and Sunday of service. The surveys will be scheduled in January 2021 to ensure that school is in session and traffic levels and patterns are typical (to the extent that can be expected given the ongoing pandemic). The survey process will accommodate both English and Spanish language needs, as necessary.

The project team will recruit and train survey personnel and assign them to survey runs during the course of an expected two-week period for survey distribution. In addition, project team members will be present on-site during the survey process to work with Votran operations staff to ensure the orderly placement of survey personnel on buses and deal with any issues that may arise during the effort. The trained surveyors will approach riders once they board to request a survey interview. All bus riders will have an equal chance of being interviewed, as all candidates will be randomly selected to be interviewed once they alight.

All completed survey entries will be downloaded and prepared for data processing and analysis. The draft response database then will be cleaned to ensure accuracy, consistency, and appropriateness of response cohorts for each question. Additional geocoding also may be required at this stage. Once cleaned, data analysis will be performed to create selected cross-tabulations and statistics consistent with previous bus passenger data collection efforts and to reflect input from the PRC. The project team will be responsible for quality control and accuracy throughout the data entry and analysis process, and also will seek to include any pertinent information, as available, from previous bus passenger surveys.



Online Surveys

To understand the needs and concerns of persons who cannot participate in other outreach events, two online surveys of the general public will be conducted. Development of the surveys will be coordinated with the PRC and will be implemented in phases. The first survey will be conducted in the first phase of TDP outreach (Phase I) to seek public input on needs and obtain information related to attitudes, latent demand, and general support of the community related to public transit services while augmenting findings of the passenger survey.



The Phase II survey will be conducted after the development of potential service alternatives for the TDP and focus on public reaction to proposed recommendations. The online surveys will be posted on the Votran website and distributed via current email and social media outlets available to the agency. As is feasible, each survey link also will be made available via other available County websites. In addition, participants attending the planned public workshops and discussion group workshops will be invited to disseminate the survey links. Survey responses will be compiled and all comments will be included in the final results summary available on a TDP-specific website, and a tablet-based and/or hard copy version of the survey will be provided at planned public meetings and discussion groups and to partnering agencies to help enhance the level of response.



Discussion Group Workshops

Up to four invitation-based discussion group workshops will also be conducted. Each will involve a smaller group of participants (8–12 persons) in an intimate meeting setting that promotes more in-depth, open-ended discussion about issues, needs, and opportunities from the perspectives of users and non-users. The project team will coordinate with the PRC to identify and invite potential participants to each workshop. Each discussion group will be attended by participants of similar backgrounds to provide for more robust discussion.

The following four groups have been identified for the discussion group workshops:

- **Business Community Discussion** – Business, health, chambers of commerce, Hotel/Motel Association, International Speedway Boulevard Coalition, Team Volusia
- **Social Services and Workforce Discussion** – Social service agencies and workforce development board
- **Education and Active Stakeholder Discussion** – Colleges and active stakeholder groups, such as Association for Responsible Development and bike/ped community
- **Transit User Discussion** – Current bus riders

At the workshops, a variety of techniques will be used to encourage participation and elicit perceptions, ideas, preferences, and other input that is important to inform the TDP process.



A key focus for each of the workshops will be on getting input from the participants on the effectiveness and adequacy of the transportation options in the area/region, as well as what they perceive the community's expectations are regarding both public and private transportation providers.



4 Discussion Groups: Nov 2020

Public Workshops

Transit workshops designed to inform and engage the general public should be a key part of any TDP outreach effort. Up to four general public workshops will be conducted to further support the Votran TDP public participation process, as summarized below.

- **Phase I Workshops** – Two public workshops will be hosted to solicit feedback regarding transit needs and vision during Phase I outreach. These workshops may most probably be held virtually to provide a more safe and attractive option to an in-person event option due to the ongoing COVID-19 related health/exposure concerns. If provided virtually, multiple online avenues will be provided for participation and for anyone without internet facilities, an option to join by telephone will also be provided. However, the final format of the workshop has not yet been determined and will be decided based on input from the PRC.
- **Phase II Workshops** – Two additional public workshops will be hosted to solicit feedback regarding TDP alternatives and priorities during the later stages of the TDP process with Phase II outreach. Depending on the health and safety guidelines and attendance potential at that time, these workshops may be held virtually or as standalone events at different locations. This set of workshops will provide an opportunity to offer input on the effectiveness of the proposed service concepts to meet the transit needs of the communities Votran serves.



Phase I Workshops: Dec 2020

Phase II Workshops: Apr – May 2021

Collateral Materials and Public Notification

To support the outreach events included as part of this PIP, flyers, fact sheets, PowerPoint presentations, media/press releases, and other materials will also be developed. Using web, email, social and printed media, these materials, as summarized below, will be developed and/or distributed to inform about public outreach activities and TDP's purpose and goals. As feasible, the materials also will be made available on a TDP-specific website linked to the existing Votran website.



- **Fact Sheets** – to distribute information to the public and stakeholders that offer an overview of the TDP and goals while promoting the value and importance of public involvement; will direct and encourage the public to reach out to Votran and project team to share questions and concerns.
- **Flyers** – to share information with the public on upcoming events and educate the public on the public involvement process and the value of their participation; will direct the public to visit the Votran website to stay involved and informed with the development of the TDP.
- **Project Presentation** – a user-friendly, graphical PowerPoint presentation to support the communication and adoption of the TDP; will be available for use by Volusia County/Votran staff beyond the adoption of the TDP.
- **Media/Press Releases** – to promote the PIP and its activities, including the opportunity to participate in public input surveys, promote attendance at virtual or in-person public workshops, and amplify efforts to involve the public in the prioritization of goals for the TDP and the future development of Votran services. This information will be provided to Votran’s public relations staff and/or Volusia County communications team for review prior to their release to the media.



4. Public Involvement Activity Schedule

A public outreach schedule has been developed to ensure completion and approval of the TDP by Volusia County by September 1, 2021. Table 4-1 presents the tentative schedule for the public outreach activities included in the Volusia County TDP.

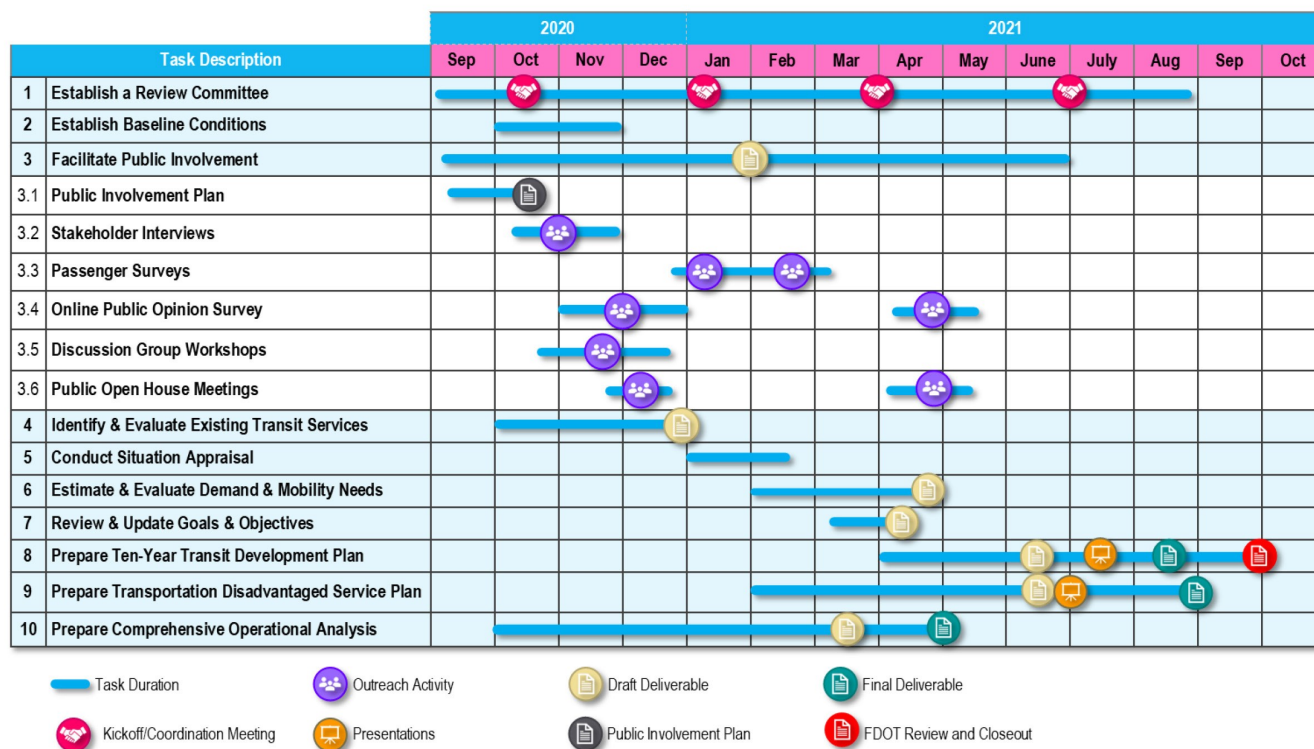
The overall schedule for the TDP, which shows the timeline for outreach activities as well as other components of the TDP, is shown in Figure 4-1.

Table 4-1: Tentative TDP Public Involvement Activity Schedule

TDP Outreach Activity	Timeline
Project Review Committee Meetings	October 2020 – August 2021
Stakeholder Interviews	October – November 2020
Discussion Group Workshops	November 2020
Phase I – Online Survey	November – December 2020
Phase I – Public Workshops	December 2020
Bus Passenger Survey	January 2021
Phase II – Online Survey	April – May 2021
Phase II – Public Workshops	April – May 2021



Figure 4-1: Votran TDP Major Update - Overall Schedule



Votran TDP Public Involvement Plan

4-2

Appendix B-2

Table B-1: Public Involvement Toolbox

	Outreach Phase				Relative Cost	Relative Effort	Participation Potential
	Zero	One	Two	Post-TDP			
Project Review Committee					Low	Low	
Stakeholder Interviews (phone)					Medium	Medium	
Public Open House					High	High	
Public Workshops (in-person)					High	High	
Board Visioning Workshops					Medium	High	
Transit Planning Charrettes					High	High	
Discussion Group (in-person)					High	High	
Bus Operator Interviews					Low	Medium	
Meeting in a Box					Medium	Medium	
Grassroots Outreach					Medium	High	
Social Media					Low/Med	Low/High	
Agency Websites					Low	Low	
Email Blasts					Low	Low	
Social Media Livestream					Medium	Medium	
Newspaper/Media					Medium	Low	
Public Outreach Software					High	Medium	
On-Going Comments					Low	Low	
Committee/Board Meetings					Medium	High	
Discussion Group (virtual)					Medium	High	
Discussion Group (Hybrid)					High	High	
Public Workshop (virtual)					High	High	
Public Workshop (Hybrid)					High	High	
Project Websites					Medium	Medium	

Surveys	Outreach Phase				Relative Cost	Relative Effort	Participation Potential
	Zero	One	Two	Post-TDP			
On-Board Bus Rider					High	High	
Bus Operator					Low	Low	
General Public – Online					Low	Medium	
General Public – Paper					Medium	Medium	
Employers/Employees					Medium	Medium	
College/Educational Institution					Medium	Medium	
Rider Intercept					High	High	
Mail Out					Medium	Medium	
Telephone					Medium	Medium	

Project Review Committee (PRC)

While not required, a Project Review Committee is recommended to 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 local 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, PRC size can vary across TDP efforts. However, it may be prudent to limit the total size of the team to no more than five to seven members to ensure that PRC meetings are not difficult to schedule, the support and review process is not overly burdened by too many perspectives, and the team remains sufficiently agile to enable the efficient execution of the TDP.

Transit agencies may use already available transit advisory groups or committees for this purpose, as well. Because some of these committees may represent the bus riding public, they can provide valuable perspectives, opinions, and recommendations about 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 also is 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, affordable housing agencies, Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs), 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 or other virtual means, 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, four 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 large quantity and wide range 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 utilizing tablet computers and/or smartphone apps to collect surveys electronically to reduce collection costs and time, and improve data accuracy.

In-person 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 may be included in the agenda with a set time or a “looped” informational 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.

Virtual Public Workshops

A virtual public workshop is hosted via a video conferencing platform such as GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc. Hosts, speakers, panelists, and participants join remotely and engage and interact by microphone/phone, webcam, and other virtual tools that are conducive to this particular format, like online polling, chat functions, voting options, and annotation tools.

Hybrid Public Workshops

A hybrid public workshop is one in which participants are able to participate either in person at a physical location or via joining remotely using a video conferencing platform. Regardless of the workshop format used, a hybrid workshop facilitates both the in-person and virtual participation components taking place simultaneously and ensures that the format and information dissemination/collection techniques used are conducive to both audiences.

Workshop Exercises

Following are two example exercises that are beneficial for use at various types of workshops. They are useful for collecting input on needs and priorities from participants.

Dot Polling Exercise

Dot Polling is an interactive exercise that can easily be conducted at an in-person open house or public workshop. Though relatively easy to execute, this exercise assists agencies with the ranking of citizen priorities by providing for individual input, while at the same time encouraging group decision-making. In the exercise, alternatives are ranked based on the number of dots each receives. Through this process, public-preferred prioritization of a set of alternatives can be achieved. Dot exercises also can be used to identify current or potential rider origins and destinations. These exercises can be used in most public workshop settings, as well, including traditional public workshops, open houses, charrettes, or discussion groups.

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 about 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 committees, 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. The MPO Board and advisory committee meetings also are public forums that afford citizens yet another 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-related 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 each workshop, ensure the participation of stakeholders in future outreach activities (e.g., distribute online survey link and schedule of TDP outreach activities).

Virtual Discussion Group Workshop

A virtual discussion group workshop is hosted via a video conferencing platform such as GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc. Hosts, speakers, panelists, and discussion group participants join remotely and engage and interact by microphone/phone, webcam, and other virtual tools that are conducive to this particular format, like online polling, chat functions, voting options, and annotation tools.

This format was extremely beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/2021, when in-person meetings were not allowed or discouraged due to social distancing and other safety requirements.

Hybrid Discussion Group Workshop

A hybrid discussion group workshop is one in which invited participants are able to participate either in person at a physical location or via joining remotely using a video conferencing platform. The hybrid discussion group workshop format facilitates both the in-person and virtual participation components taking place simultaneously. It also ensures that the workshop format and information dissemination/collection techniques used are conducive to both audiences.

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 operators 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 can take part in such meeting-in-a-box events. Since meetings are often organized through the invitation of peers, and the nature of these events is very informal, 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 to participate in a single-purpose meeting. This can help expose the TDP to the general public, whose interest might range from being a current or potential transit customer to being a taxpayer primarily interested in the stewardship of the community’s 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 ethno-cultural 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 project, 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/Boosts** – 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, online advertising can be 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.

Project Websites

If an agency website is not available for use during a TDP effort, a project-specific website can be created for this purpose and elements, such as updates, documents, event information, social media, and survey links, can be included.

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 effective 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's efforts and further expand what will hopefully become a living, growing database.

Social Media Livestream

Livestreaming 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. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and other platforms all offer a livestream option.

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 media 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 according to each of their unique situations.

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 also should assess input/findings from any 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 system users

- 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, and 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., collection of input on initial needs or feedback on alternatives). 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 to 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 conducting interviews with employer representatives and administering a survey to employees.

In-person or telephone 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 who 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 usually needed to secure a single interview and, often, a number of these individuals will choose to not participate at all.

As a concluding topic in the employer interviews, asking the representatives 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, 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, the 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 B-3

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Briefing	A presentation given in-person, or a brief informational paper, often tailored to a specific person or group such as an elected official, policy board, neighborhood council, or a civic organization.		✓
Brochure	An informational handout, usually printed, to provide general information about the planning study and process.	✓	✓
Community Profile	A compilation of general demographic information about people in the study area. A community profile might include information on population, age distribution, ethnicity distribution, income levels, housing units, household size, existing land uses, or other relevant facts. A community profile could be printed or made available online.		✓
Direct Mail	Distribution of information about the planning study or planning process via the U.S. Postal Service. Direct mail campaigns can be costly but provide a level of certainty that affected interests have been notified. Where cost is a concern, an initial direct mail campaign could direct people to an online source for future updates, or let people know how they may sign up to receive future notifications and information via email.	✓	✓
Displays	Posters, banners, or other large-size documents suitable for displaying on easels, walls, or other vertical spaces. Displays may be used to provide information at a specific public meeting. Or, they may be designed as self-explanatory materials that can be left unattended in a public space over a certain period of time for people to		✓

Source: *Putting the People in Planning*, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Email	Compiling an email list of interested parties and providing periodic email updates is a cost-effective way to communicate information about the plan and planning process.	✓	✓
Fact Sheet	Typically, a one to two-page document, either printed as a handout or made available online, that provides information about the plan or a specific planning topic. Fact sheets are useful in helping to dispel misinformation. A complex planning study might have separate fact sheets for a variety of individual topics.		✓
FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)	A set of questions and responses about the planning study, or specific planning topics used to educate the planning audience and reduce misinformation. This is a useful item to include in a media packet .		✓
Flyer	A one-page, one-sided handout suitable for posting in public places, often with brief information about the plan and upcoming outreach activities. Other agency partners, such as transit providers, or social services offices, can often help to post or distribute flyers.	✓	
Infographics	A compilation of images and/or charts with minimal text, that helps to explain a planning concept or process. Infographics can be useful at multiple levels ranging from an “at-a-glance” overview of a specific topic or an explanation of a more complex process. For example, A flow chart of your planning process may be a helpful infographic that can be used as a stand-alone document or inserted in other outreach materials.		✓

Source: *Putting the People in Planning*, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

Appendix B-3

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Media Packet	Providing “ready to publish” information about the planning study or process for those in the media industry can be an effective way of managing your message and reducing the spread of misinformation. A basic media packet might include a press release , a study area map, fact sheet or FAQs , timeline, and perhaps an infographic about the planning process or a specific topic. A media packet could be made available online for download by media outlets.	✓	✓
News Articles	Information about the project that is published in print or online, usually at no cost to the planning study. Providing information in a press release or media packet can help to encourage news outlets to publish stories. Some publications may allow a planning team member or a local elected official to contribute an article as a guest columnist. Others may seek out interviews with members of the planning team or others. For complex or controversial plans, it is important to establish the planning team as the official, legitimate source of information. The planning team may wish to sit down with local news editors to ask for assistance in making sure published stories are balanced and factual.	✓	✓
Newsletter	Typically, a one- to four-page document, either mailed, emailed, handed out, or posted online, that is updated and distributed periodically throughout the planning study. Newsletters provide a status report, explaining plan recommendations as they unfold, as well as the reasons behind the recommendations. In addition, newsletters can communicate next steps and explain any upcoming participation opportunities.	✓	✓

Source: *Putting the People in Planning*, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Newspaper Ads	Purchased space in a print or online publication, typically used to notify people of input opportunities. (While less common, larger planning projects with significant budgets may sometimes purchase bigger advertising spaces to display or explain specific plan recommendations.)	✓	
Online Ads	Advertisements placed with online search engines, third-party websites, online publications, or other online services to notify people of input opportunities.	✓	
Presentations	Speaking to groups about the planning study or process, often using a slide show.	✓	✓
Press Release	A text document, typically one page or less, sent to news outlets to provide information about the planning study and process, including announcing upcoming milestones or public involvement opportunities.	✓	
Reports	The planning study may produce interim reports or technical memos, such as a community profile or an existing conditions report, that can provide valuable information for interested parties. Including executive summaries can be helpful for a lay audience.		✓

Source: *Putting the People in Planning*, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

Appendix B-3

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Social Media	A host of social networking applications can be used to help disseminate plan information. These tools require careful planning to determine if and how social media interactions will be used during the planning process. For example, perhaps the planning team wishes to use social media to get the word out about a specific event but does not have the resources to monitor and respond to ongoing social media discussions. In this case, messaging should be clear that social media comments will not be monitored or considered by the project team. Instead, people could be directed to official input channels.	✓	
Speakers' Bureau	Enlisting volunteers from outside the planning team to present information to community groups can be a budget-sensitive way to expand the reach of a public involvement program. Care is needed, however, to confirm that volunteer speakers are well-educated on the salient planning issues and topics, and to make sure that no unintended bias or alternative agendas are introduced.		✓
Translated or Alternate Format Materials	If a scan indicates the planning area has concentrations of people with Limited English Proficiency, preparing translated versions of informational materials such as brochures, flyers, or newsletters may be important. It may also be desirable to provide these general informational materials in a large-print format to assist older or visually-impaired participants.	✓	✓

Source: *Putting the People in Planning*, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
TV or Radio Spots	A public service announcement (PSA) can be written and sent to local radio and television stations. PSAs are often communicated by media outlets free of charge to help raise awareness of topics that are in the public interest. The planning team typically has no influence on when a PSA will air, however. Purchased radio or TV spots are another option. An independent production company may be hired to develop an audio or video advertisement. Or a media station may have its own production capabilities and can work with the planning team to create a customized script or video about the project for a fee.	✓	
TV, Radio or Newspaper Interviews	Advance preparation is important if there is a chance someone from the project team may be asked for an interview by a television, radio station, or print publication. As part of your public involvement planning, be sure to identify who is authorized to speak to the media about the project and direct any interview requests to that person. Strategize key messages with your planning team and create an FAQs document to help prepare responses to questions that your spokesperson may be asked. Also see previous guidance for news articles .	✓	✓
Website	An online presence for most planning studies has become a standard practice. If your agency has a website, perhaps a new page can be created for your specific planning project. Alternatively, if a separate website for the planning study is desired, many low-cost website builders are available that allow someone with little or no web design experience to create an effective site for disseminating information. (See Section 3.4.1 for discussion of online tools for two-way interaction.)		✓

Source: *Putting the People in Planning*, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

APPENDIX

C

KEY RESOURCES

FDOT Information Hubs & Tools for
Florida Transit Agencies



FDOT Public Transit Office <http://www.fdot.gov/transit/default.shtm>

INDEX A-Z Search FDOT...

OFFICES MAPS & DATA CONTACT ABOUT PROJECTS RESOURCES NEWSROOM CAREERS

Public Transit Office

Welcome to Public Transit Office

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 and Procurement, Transit Operations, Transit Planning) each of which has specific areas of responsibility.

Elizabeth Scutts, State Transit Manager

Our Mission

In partnership with public transportation providers, the FDOT Public Transit Office strives to provide reliable, safe, and cost-effective access to those who live, work learn, and play in Florida. **Our vision is to create a better travel experience with viable and reliable options to driving for residents and visitors to Florida.**

The FDOT Transit Office consists of three sections: Transit Operations and Safety, Grant Administration, and Transit Planning and Commuter Assistance. [Click here](#) for an office organization chart. Detailed information for each section is available on the Divisions link.

Public Transit Office
State Transit Manager
Elizabeth (Liz) Scutts
1-850-414-4530

Assistant State Transit Manager
Robert Westbrook
1-850-414-4533

605 Suwannee St Tallahassee, FL 32399
Tel: 850-414-4508

Additional Contacts
[Staff Directory](#)

[Office Resources](#)

Florida Transit Planning Network <https://planfortransit.com>

Home About Resources Professional Development Florida Transit Agencies Listserv

PLAN FOR TRANSIT

Florida Transit Planning Network

A Resource for Transportation Planning and Information Exchange

FTIS Florida Transit Information System <http://www.ftis.org>

FDOT **FTIS** FLORIDA TRANSIT INFORMATION SYSTEM

Home Applications Training Links Contact

Urban iNTD

Urban Integrated National Transit Database

A web-based system sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation for the retrieval and analysis of multiple years of urban National Transit Database (NTD).



TBEST Transit Planning Software <https://tbest.org>

FDOT **TBEST** Transit Planning Software

HOME FEATURES DOWNLOADS TRAINING FORUM CONTACT US

TBEST Transit Planning Software

DOWNLOAD TBEST 4.7

DOWNLOAD TBEST USER GUIDE

COA Ridership Estimation Socio-Economic Market Analysis Land Use Market Analysis FTA Title VI Reporting Network Accessibility Analysis Strategic Plan Analysis TBEST Scenarios

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.

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