

DRAFT REGIONAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM (RP3)

Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA)
Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPOs) Chairs
Coordinating Committee (CCC)



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This document was compiled as a collaborative work effort in cooperation with the staffs of TBARTA, and the Hillsborough, Pascoe, Pinellas, Sarasota-Manatee, and Citrus-Hernando Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and the Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). Careful reviews of the MPO/TPO Public Involvement Plans and other relevant documents, websites, and Federal, State and local regulations were conducted. This document will serve as the basis from which the West Central Florida region can draw when executing Regional Public Participation strategies, which emphasizes coordination and synergy between TBARTA, the TBARTA MPOs CCC and its member MPOs.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of both the West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) and the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA), both entities have conducted regional public involvement/information programs that engaged citizens in the development of transportation programs and projects.... otherwise known as the transportation planning process. However, the term “process” often frustrates citizens since the terminology is complex, the process can be confusing, and a tangible product can be difficult to identify.

Furthermore, issues associated with attaining effective and meaningful public involvement at the regional level are often more difficult to overcome than at the local level, including:

- Lack of a clearly defined region.
- Broad issues that are difficult to assess in a meaningful manner.
- Unclear solutions to large and often overwhelming issues.
- A lack of cohesion and identity - West Central Florida consists of a group of “metropolitan” areas rather than one clearly defined region.
- The need to crossing jurisdictional lines for planning/implementing intercounty projects or when necessary for other coordination purposes.
- Local, regional, super-regional and statewide processes overlap.
- Lack of familiarity with regional issues and parochial perspectives.

1.A. What are TBARTA and the TBARTA MPOs CCC?

The **Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority, (TBARTA)**, was created as a regional transportation agency of the US State of Florida on July 1, 2007. The purpose of the agency is "...to plan, develop, finance, construct, own, purchase, operate, maintain, relocate, equip, repair, and manage multimodal systems Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties." The agency coordinates its efforts with the Florida Department of Transportation Districts 1 and 7, as well as MPOs and transit agencies in its service area to improve transportation in the Tampa Bay region, and is required by statute to develop a Regional Transit Development Plan (RTDP) for its 5-county service area.

The **TBARTA Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Chairs Coordinating Committee (TBARTA MPOs CCC)** was established in 1993 by Florida Statute 339.175 to coordinate projects deemed regionally significant, review regionally significant land use decisions, review all proposed regionally significant projects



affecting more than one MPO, and institute a conflict resolution process throughout the West Central Florida region. Member MPOs/TPOs include: Hernando MPO (now the Hernando/Citrus MPO), Hillsborough MPO, Pasco MPO, Pinellas MPO (now Forward Pinellas), Polk TPO, and the Sarasota-Manatee MPO. In December of 2013, the CCC Board voted to merge into and consolidate its transportation planning activities with those of TBARTA, for a streamlined and unified regional planning process.

The goal of the CCC is to prioritize and find ways to address the transportation needs of West Central Florida. These goals are achieved through the support and cooperation of its member agencies, partner entities and advisory committees. The CCC develops regional solutions to transportation problems and ensures a consistent regional planning approach among the six-member agencies. In that context, the CCC has elected to be responsible for the following activities:

- A Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) to prioritize projects for funding;
- Regional transit planning, in conjunction with TBARTA and local transit agencies;
- Regional Congestion Management System;
- Air Quality Management System;
- Regional Multi-Use Trails Element;
- Major Investment Studies Coordination;
- Regional Data Sharing and Mapping;
- Regional Public Involvement Program;
- A Regional Conflict Resolution Process

1.B. Defining the Regional Public Participation Process

“Regional” is more than simply multi-county – it implies an interest in identifying and solving issues and facing common (or at least inter-related) problems that can be solved more effectively using a joint methodology rather than through a piecemeal process.

Basic parameters to consider when setting up a regional process that will effectively engage all elements of the community include the following:

- Define the regional community – local versus regional
- Bring individuals and groups together in a large and diverse area
- Bring the community together
- Set the agenda – what do we talk about
- What Happens Afterwards – closing the gaps

Due to the complexity of large regional processes/institutions, particularly with multiple agencies/jurisdictions, it can be easier for decisions to be made at the local level where interest is concentrated, and the constituency is well-defined. A reliable mechanism should be found to ensure that regional transportation plans, policies and programs are properly presented and considered by the public throughout this large, multi-jurisdictional area, and are fully considered by decision-makers.

1.C. Federal Requirements for Public Participation

The Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 mandates that the public participation programs of metropolitan planning processes shall include a “proactive public participation process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing participation of the public in developing plans

and transportation improvement programs (TIPs).” In addition, in accordance with the FAST Act, MPOs must provide and/or carry out the following:

- Minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public participation process is initially adopted or revised;
- Timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, and other interested parties

Federal legislation also requires public involvement in developing and amending metropolitan and rural long-range transportation plans, Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and project development. Transportation planning processes must also comply with the requirements of the following acts and orders:

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA): Requires reasonable efforts to be made to accommodate citizens with disabilities who wish to attend meetings.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act: Prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – Executive Order 13166: Clarifies that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has, as its purpose, to ensure accessibility to programs and services to otherwise eligible persons who are not proficient in the English language.

Environmental Justice (EJ) – Executive Order 12898: Requires Federal agencies to achieve environmental justice by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including the interrelated social and economic effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States. Because MPOs are sub-recipients of federal funds, they are required to comply with EO 12898.

Department of Transportation Order 5610.2(a): The USDOT Order requires consideration of environmental justice principles in all programs, policies or activities, and sets forth steps to prevent disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority or low-income populations through Title VI analyses and environmental justice analyses conducted as part of Federal transportation planning and NEPA provisions.

1.D. State Requirements for Public Participation

The State of Florida also has requirements for public participation, which are found in Florida Statutes (FS), Title XI, Chapter 163, Section 163.3181. This statute directs local planning agencies and local governmental units to adopt procedures that “...provide for broad dissemination of the proposals and alternatives, opportunity for written comments, public hearings as provided herein, provisions for open discussion, communications programs, information services, and consideration of and response to public comments.”

Other frequently referenced statutes and requirements include:

Executive Order 07-01, Section 2 - Plain Language Initiative: Announcements, publications, and other documents provided by state agencies should contain “clear and concise” information; be free of technical jargon; contain pertinent information, and; use short sentences in an active voice. Additionally, it is suggested that graphic and editorial design of public engagement documents be user-friendly.

Section 286.011, FS, Public Business (Government in the Sunshine): Declares all meetings of any board or commission of any state, county, municipal, or political subdivision, agency, or authority to be public meetings that are open to the public at all times; requires reasonable notice of meetings; minutes be available for public inspection, and; prohibits public meetings from being held at a facility or location that discriminates on the basis of sex, age, race, creed, color, origin, or economic status or that otherwise restricts public access.

SECTION 2: TBARTA MPOS CCC REGIONAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM (RP3) FRAMEWORK

The regional public involvement effort is an act in coordination and synergy between the six MPOs, TBARTA, the Regional Public Participation Program (RP3) Advisory Group (previously the RP3 Working Group), and regional partners, including the Florida Department of Transportation, and others. The regional team, rather than acting unilaterally, will closely coordinate and schedule efforts across organizations. Regarding tactics like surveying or events, the regional effort will “piggy-back” on local efforts. For example, rather than expensively and redundantly staffing, advertising, and managing its own events, the RP3 Advisory Group will efficiently supplement the efforts of the local MPOs and interact with the public on regional issues at key local MPO events.

TBARTA has the underlying goal in its public participation efforts to raise the awareness and importance of transportation in the regional conversation, and endeavours to “provide...useful, timely information to our constituency and policy leaders...” TBARTA maintains an active program to engage the public during key points in the project development process. Events and meetings are noticed and published on its website, and staff consistently attends meetings of public, private and non-profit groups throughout the region.

TBARTA consistently maintains a set of statistics regarding its ongoing outreach program which it updates on a regular basis. Following is a sample of the statistics recently collected by TBARTA (as of November 2017).

- People we have spoken to 165,970
- Events 872
- TBARTA related news articles 1,018
- TBARTA website visits 27,504
- Average daily website visits 111

2.A. RP3 Decision-Making and Responsibilities

Several agencies at the local level are involved with actively conducting public involvement programs in support of transportation planning activities. This also applies to entities conducting public participation in support of regional planning.

Within the Tampa Bay region there are three primary entities that are required to maintain public involvement processes that support the transportation planning process, as follows:

Tampa Bay Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) – formed in 2007 under state statute, TBARTA was reorganized in 2017 as a regional *transit* authority. As such, the TBARTA public participation program will be comparable to public involvement activities followed by transit

agencies, or as required for development of the Regional TDP. TBARTA also maintains programs in conformance with LEP, Title VI and ADA requirements.

- **TBARTA Governing Board** – The TBARTA Governing Board is made up of elected officials and appointed members from around the region. Membership includes: gubernatorial appointments, county commissioners, transit authority members, mayors of Tampa and St. Petersburg, and FDOT advisory members. As stated on the TBARTA website, the goal of the Governing Board is to “communicate with all local jurisdictions and the diverse public with honesty, integrity, and realism to build a credible reputation in word and action.”
- The **TBARTA Transit Management Committee (TMC), Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the TBARTA MPOs CCC Committees** provide the framework and forum for regional transportation planning and coordination.

TBARTA MPOs Chairs Coordinating Committee (TBARTA MPOs CCC) – the six MPOs in West Central Florida are signatory to the TBARTA CCC’s Interlocal Agreement. Since its formation in 1993, the CCC has consistently maintained a coordinated public participation program. The CCC Board conducts two meetings a year, and holds public hearings concerning regional priorities. Recommendations are sent to the District 1 & 7 offices of FDOT, and an annual recommendation is made to the TBARTA Board regarding Regional Priority Projects. The TBARTA MPOs CCC is supported by MPO staff which comprise the Staff Directors Committee, and the RP3 Advisory Group – both of which are described in the following sections.

- **Metropolitan Planning Organizations** – the six individual MPOs that are located within the West Central Florida area (Hernando/Citrus MPO, Pasco MPO, Hillsborough MPO, Pinellas MPO (Forward Pinellas), Sarasota/Manatee MPO and the Polk TPO). Federal guidance lays out requirements for MPOs to develop a “collaborative and comprehensive” Public Participation Plan. Development of the PPP must be done in “collaboration with the public and stakeholder communities,” and typically consists of public involvement goals, policies, or objectives, and descriptions of public involvement techniques.
- **TBARTA MPOs CCC Staff Directors Committee** – this committee is composed of the staff directors from MPOs having membership on the CCC Board. The committee meets monthly to discuss ongoing regional planning projects and programs, and coordinate activities among MPOs and partner agencies. All items which are presented to the CCC Board for subsequent action are developed by the Staff Directors Committee. The committee also considers recommendations from other CCC committees, including the RP3 Advisory Group, the TRIP Advisory Group, and the Multi-Use Trails Committee.
- **TBARTA MPOs CCC RP3 Advisory Group** – the RP3 Advisory Group is currently an ad hoc committee made up of public engagement professionals from the MPOs of Pinellas, Pasco, Polk, Hillsborough, Hernando/Citrus, and Sarasota/Manatee Counties. The group currently meets quarterly, or as deemed necessary by TBARTA.

The purpose of the group is to provide input into the consolidation of the public participations plans of the CCC and TBARTA into one regional public participation plan, advise staff on public participation strategies, issues, and trends in the development of a Best Practices Guide for inclusion in the recommendations of the bi-annual RP3 Measures of Effectiveness Report

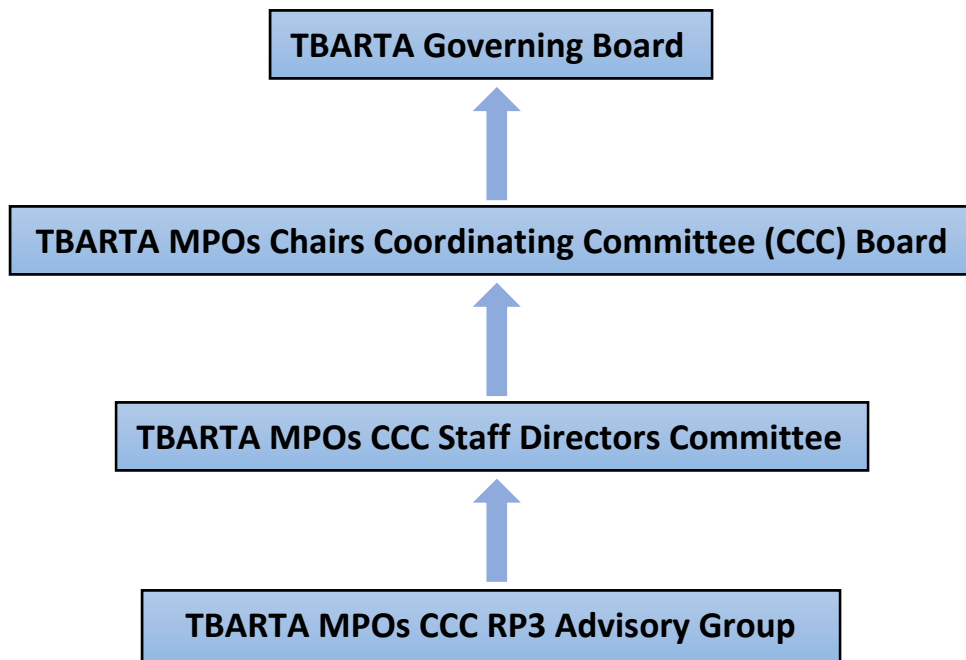
(MOE), and provide assistance with access to required data for evaluating the measures of effectiveness of past regional public participation efforts.

The roles of the RP3 Advisory Group are as follows:

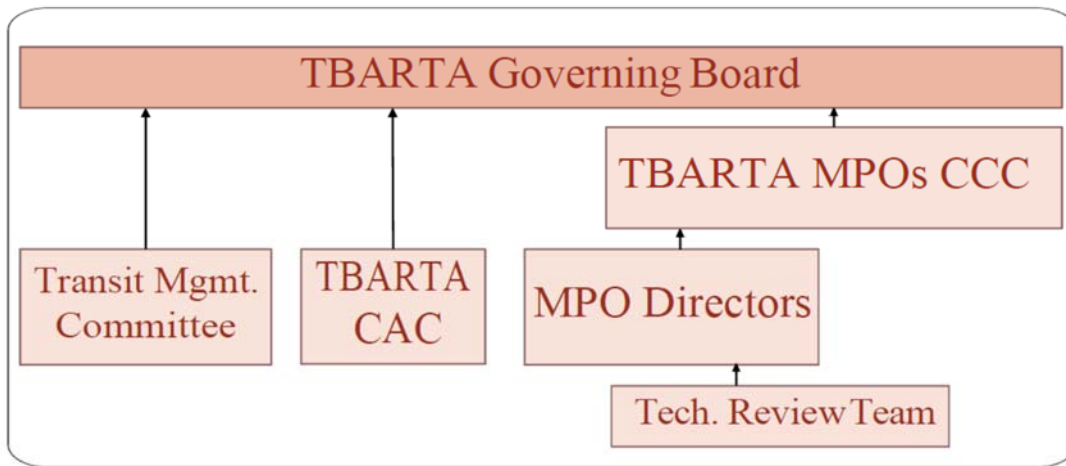
- Providing region-oriented advice to TBARTA and the TBARTA MPOs CCC on effective public engagement strategies, best practices, and performance measures/targets.
- Assisting with coordination and resources required in the development and implementation of a single regional public participation plan for the eight-county West Central Florida region, as well as the bi-annual RP3 MOE report.
- Evaluating proposed goals and recommendations for the next two-year public participation period.
- Promoting public awareness and participation in the planning and implementation of the Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan and help disseminate information to local citizen groups.

The following are descriptions of the makeup and functions of the four levels of public participation decision-making as shown in the graphic.

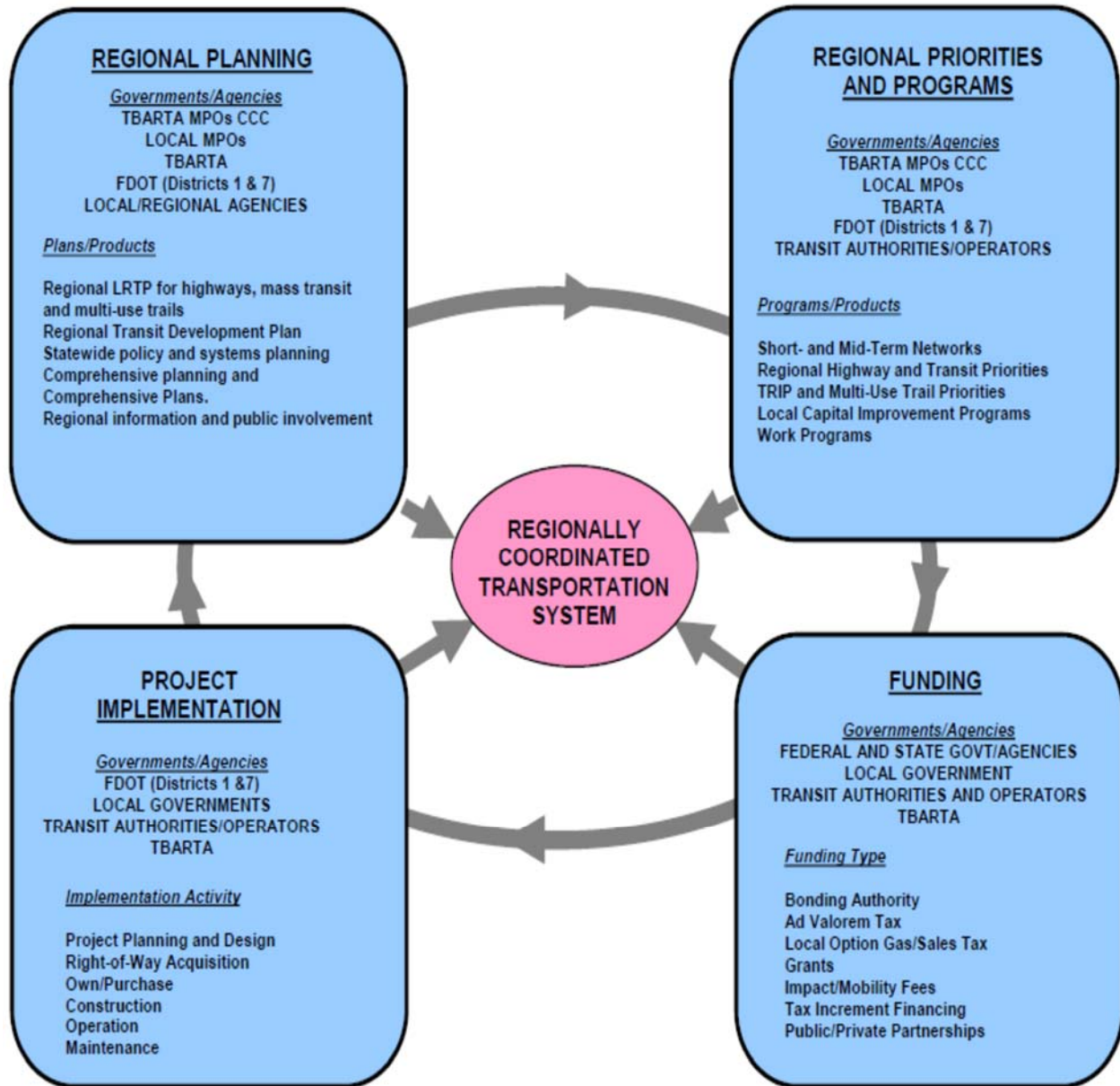
Regional Public Participation Decision-Making Process



The following chart shows the relationship to the TBARTA Governing Board to other entities that either are involved with regional decision-making or support the overall regional planning process.



The following depicts the overall regional transportation process for the Tampa Bay area. Several entities are involved in conducting and coordinating the process from the planning stage through project implementation.



2.B. Target Audience

The goal of this regional public involvement effort is to reach each of the target audiences articulated in the respective MPO Public Involvement Plans. This will naturally be facilitated by the regional efforts strategy of efficiently “piggy-backing” on MPO events that have already been planned, located, and scheduled in a manner that are most likely to reach target audiences.

Below is a partial list of targeted audiences:

- Stakeholders: including regional residents, visitors, commuters, etc.
- Title VI, Environmental Justice, and Transportation Disadvantaged populations
- Local county and municipal governments and special districts
- Community organizations, schools, and universities
- Business/Development & Tourism Associations
- Media
- MPO Boards and Committees
- State and Federal legislators

SECTION 3: REGIONAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS

The overriding goal of the TBARTA MPOs CCC Public Involvement Program is to make residents, visitors, and stakeholders aware of, and involved in, regional transportation planning.

The primary strategies and tactics of the regional team will be to coordinate, partner, and develop synergies between the TBARTA and the six MPOs to achieve regional public involvement goals. Objectives for each of the goals are contained in Appendix 7.C, along with an assessment of related activities that were systematically implemented.

The goals for the public involvement process for this Plan are described below.

1. **Effective Communication:** Focus on proactive, effective, timely, and consistent communication, both within and outside of the CCC/TBARTA.
2. **Trust and Understanding:** Build public trust and understanding by producing accurate, clear information to encourage public participation.
3. **Collaboration:** Collaborate and build partnerships with government agencies, civic organizations, and other interested parties.
4. **Inclusive Engagement:** Provide access, be inclusive, and strive to engage all affected populations.
5. **Resourcefulness:** Be cost-conscious, economical, and resourceful, while utilizing a variety of techniques to gather input from a diverse population within the region.
6. **Meaningful Input:** Obtain meaningful public input to inform the decision-making process.

SECTION 4: TBARTA AND TBARTA MPOs CCC LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AND TITLE VI PROGRAMS

Both TBARTA and the TBARTA MPOs CCC maintain a consolidated process which supports their LEP and Title VI Programs. The TBARTA website contains information regarding these programs for both organizations. As agencies that receive federal funds through their MPO/TPO member agencies, TBARTA and the TBARTA MPOs CCC comply with Title VI, including LEP

and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements in their activities and interactions with the public. To comply, public hearings and other public events are held at ADA accessible locations collateral materials are offered in English and Spanish, and translation services are available upon request. Public hearings and other public events are advertised with contact information to be used if special assistance or accommodations are needed.

Additionally, member MPOs/TPO LEP Plans include a demographic analysis using the most recent US Census Bureau's American Community Survey data to determine the LEP population. Written materials routinely provided by the TBARTA MPOs CCC in English also are provided in regularly encountered languages other than English, and the CCC ensures that vital documents are translated into the non-English language of each regularly encountered LEP group eligible to be served or likely to be affected by the program or activity.

Persons are informed, in conformance with Title VI, that those requiring special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation service (free of charge) should contact their local MPO/TPO. Complaints regarding denial of benefits or discrimination are also handled by a designated staff member. Persons are encouraged to make complaints in writing.

Links to complaint forms, as well as procedures and contact information, are included in Appendix 6.D. Through 2017, there have been no complaints received and no requests for translation services or assistance. For assistance requests and translation services, the public may contact the same individual five days prior to the meeting where support is required.

SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT TOOLS AND METHODS

In coordination with the efforts of each MPO, the RP3 Advisory Group will deploy a diverse variety of tactics and tools to engage the public, as follows in the section below.

5.A. TBARTA Website

The TBARTA website is the central repository of information regarding TBARTA and TBARTA MPOs CCC regional planning efforts. It will not only serve to coordinate information and the activities between the TBARTA, the TBARTA MPOs CCC, the MPOs, and various committees, but will also facilitate public awareness of the Regional Transit Development Plan (RTDP) and the Regional Transportation Plan to provide the general public with opportunities to comment, participate, ask questions, and sign up for meeting notices.

The TBARTA website will include the following:

- All print marketing collateral, in a downloadable pdf format, including fact sheets, and previously developed brochures
- Calendar of MPO and TBARTA workshops and public participation opportunities
- Links to each MPO's LRTP and commenting opportunities
- Links to social media
- Opportunity to sign up for MPO and TBARTA e-notices
- Project documents, maps, information
- "How to get involved" radio button leading to a page with links to each MPO page to sign-up for newsletter, announcements, etc.

5.B. Social Media

Social media has become an efficient and cost-effective method for expanding outreach and public participation opportunities, providing a platform for comments, questions, and advancing awareness of TBARTA and the TBARTA MPOs CCC.

Based on the results of the 2015 Measures of Effectiveness Report and Best Practices research, included in the Appendix of this document, the TBARTA MPOs CCC social media strategy will establish several permanent social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) to use to advance the regional public participation.

Several other platforms are also included in the section below, but are not yet widely used by TBARTA or the MPOs. These applications (YouTube and Pinterest) are included considering their popularity with the younger demographic, and recent trends in social media usage moving away from text based to image and video. Use of these services should take into account the scale and schedule of the project, audience,



The TBARTA **Facebook** page is designed to engage residents/visitors, promote surveys, invite people to events, and to create awareness of the regional transportation planning process. TBARTA will work with the RP3 Advisory Group to adopt rules for posting on this page



The TBARTA **Twitter** account will be utilized to invite people to events. Twitter users will be able to sign up for notices in advance of TBARTA and MPO workshops and events.



A TBARTA **LinkedIn** account will be established to unite professionals throughout the region and keep them abreast of ongoing TBARTA and TBARTA MPOs CCC activities.



A TBARTA **Pinterest** account will be established to encourage residents and visitors (for pleasure or business) to share their interests in regional transportation planning across the region.



The TBARTA **YouTube** Channel will serve as a central repository of videos relevant to the regional transportation planning process. Content will be welcomed from each MPO, and the TBARTA team may upload original content including interviews with stakeholders.

5.C. Print Marketing Materials

TBARTA and the TBARTA MPOs CCC will create print collateral to support outreach efforts, keeping in mind the target audience. Materials are designed to be disseminated by TBARTA staff, MPO staff, and by stakeholders, and will be produced in English and Spanish, with written translation in other languages provided upon request. The following print collateral is planned in support of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Regional Transit Development Plan (RTDP):

TBARTA Brochure: This document, designed to make the public aware of the existence and mission of TBARTA, will be developed and updated during the plan updates and made available on the TBARTA website. Hard copies of these brochures will be made available to all MPOs, upon request, and will be made available via all TBARTA and MPO displays at workshops.

Multi-Use Trails Brochure: The TBARTA MPOs CCC Multi-Use Trails Committee reviews the inventory of regional multi-use trails to update the Regional Multi-Use Trails Element (of the LRTP), and to develop follow-up and implementation strategies when needed. The committee also produces an update to the Regional Multi-Use Trails brochure map to inform the public about existing regional trails, linkages to local trails, and funding for planned regional trails. This brochure is distributed locally and at regional events.

RTP and RTDP Fact Sheets: These documents will be designed to make the public aware of the regional transportation planning efforts and will be kept updated during the course of these projects and made available on the TBARTA website. Hard copies of the brochures will be made available to all MPOs, upon request, and will be made available via all TBARTA displays at workshops.

5.D. Events

Events are an important part of outreach associated with executing this Regional Public Participation Plan and engaging the public. To maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness, TBARTA and the RP3 team will “piggy back” on select events, such as MPO LRTP workshops, in order to achieve coordination and synergy with MPOs. In addition, the RP3 team may plan a regional workshop that involves the business community and region-at-large.

5.E. Media Relations

TBARTA and each MPO have a methodology for communicating with the media, and each has a contact person charged with media relations and maintaining media contacts. In effort to prevent duplicating any individual organizations media messaging efforts, the strategy of TBARTA and the RP3 team will serve to coordinate with the media on regional stories and announcements on behalf of each MPO. Some strategies for media include press releases, op-eds, and letters to the editor. For press releases, a media contact will be named according to geography and the organization responsible for the project.

5.F. Newsletters

Each of the member MPOs and TBARTA utilize newsletters to inform stakeholders of events and to create awareness and participation opportunities regarding various transportation projects. The strategy will be for each MPO to include a section in their respective publications for stories of regional relevance and regional public participation opportunities, which will be coordinated through RP3 team members.

5.E. Partnerships

Following on the recent recommendations of the 2015 Measures of Effectiveness report, one of the prime strategies of this regional program is to maximize efficiency and avoid redundancies. The strategy of “piggy backing” onto existing events and workshops makes best use of taxpayer resources in that two events can be held

together, which decreases costs and increases public interest. These partnerships include but are not limited to: The Tampa Bay Partnership, a regional group focused on economic growth and development for the Tampa Bay area, local chambers of commerce, county school boards, the University of South Florida, Tampa International Airport, Innovation Place (aka Tampa Innovation Alliance) and the Tampa Bay Port Authority.

In addition to events, the strategy will be to partner on mailings, newsletters, social media, and other opportunities to communicate with the public. Examples include inserting MPO and

TBARTA news into chamber or civic newsletters, asking partners to “retweet” meeting notices, or asking government websites to link to the TBARTA website.

The regional online outreach event tool will likely involve partnering with a variety of organizations and professional societies to help ‘spread the word’.

Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TB TMA) Leadership Group – the TMA Leadership Group, consisting of the Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas MPOs, serves as a forum to focus on TMA-related issues, including developing regional consensus priorities for the TMA. The Leadership Group focuses on major cross-county transportation markets and traffic movements, and on helping the Tampa Bay metropolitan area speak with one voice in discussions of regional transportation prioritization issues and financial resources. The TMA Leadership Group acts in an advisory role to each of the three MPOs, which will have final approval of TMA work products. During a joint project to develop alternative land use/transportation scenarios, the TMA will use Metroquest public involvement software to obtain public feedback. Later the TMA will jointly develop a regional component for the individual LRTPs, and will seek public input on cost-sharing and funding strategies.

5.F. Maintaining a Cohesive RP3 Process

The overlying emphasis of this report is *regional* public involvement, which is approached at a different scale for local/county/community level activities, and faces a unique set of challenges. Regional public participation involving multiple agencies is a far different process than conducting a metropolitan (or regional) public involvement program within a single organization.

Both TBARTA and the MPOs must be provided with the proper tools to conduct their own public involvement programs, along with tools for the ongoing coordination of public involvement at the regional level - supported by an ongoing cohesive regional process to ensure they function together effectively.

5.G. RP3 Engagement Tools, Methods, and Action Plan

The following table on pages 17 and 18 lays out an ongoing process for conducting a meaningful and effective regional public participation process. Intended outcomes for RP3 Advisory Group on a continual basis include:

- Create a single, consolidated entity, that is, the RP3 Regional Advisory Group, with all partners having ownership in the RP3 process – consolidation is more efficient (and less expensive) than coordination.
- Help to move from an attitude of competition to one of cooperation – this is important at the regional level – competition creates unseen, but real, tension at the regional level.
- Give all participants an equal opportunity to contribute to a meaningful regional PI process. By bringing in local knowledge and experience, community concerns will not be overlooked, and engagement at all levels will be strengthened.

RP3 Action Plan

OBJECTIVES	SUPPORTING STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
The RP3 Advisory Group will continue to meet as needed to coordinate regional public involvement activities.	Task the RP3 Advisory Group to be an ongoing resource charged with developing and maintaining a creative regional public participation program.	Develop a set of operating procedures that will further define the RP3 Advisory Group’s role and guide its approach in supporting key regional planning programs.
	Review the need for an expanded regional public participation program (e.g., the Regional Advisory Group organized by the Atlanta MPO).	On a periodic basis, the RP3 Advisory Group should review its composition and ensure that membership is properly aligned with required level of effort.
The RP3 Advisory Group will be an ongoing element of the regional planning process and will provide for regional engagement and networking.	Information areas supporting this objective should be identified by the Advisory Group, and a detailed approach for each area should be developed.	Potential information areas include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Education • Market Research • Media Relations • Community Involvement • Evaluation
Focus the RP3 process on activities that support active community engagement.	Encourage informal dialog as an overall regional strategy rather than holding meetings or workshops (examples include “pop-up open houses,” “dinner parties,” etc.). The applicable process will be determined by the RP3 Advisory Group.	Develop innovative activities to directly reach out to all age groups, such as “reaching out” and “going out” activities.
		Hold peer exchanges for: staff, the public, elected officials, interest groups, business groups, etc.
		Take leaders to other areas, within and outside of the region, to increase their understanding of issues facing your metropolitan area.
		Identify stakeholder groups and reach out to them.... not just by sending meeting notices or brochures.
	Hold sub-regional meetings tailored around community characteristics and preferences.	
	Develop strategies to transition from competition to cooperation.	Use different and flexible approaches to engage and draw out input from diverse demographic groups.
		Identify areas of competition and develop strategies to overcome/eliminate them.
Identify market/demographic characteristics throughout the region and target public involvement activities within those areas.	Use the technical tools developed to increase outreach to diverse populations (see below) to supplement marketing activities.	

OBJECTIVES	SUPPORTING STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
Use the RP3 process as the primary public involvement process during development of the Regional LRTP .	Develop a set of strategies for public engagement during development of the LRTP and outline key activities to be followed during development, review and adoption of the Regional Plan.	<p>Whenever possible, break away from formal meeting formats when planning events or developing the message, as determined by the RP3 Advisory Group. Consider the following during Plan development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Plan’s assumptions and relevance can quickly change and must be confronted during the – Public participation in the LRTP process must be a continual effort. – Ensure that questions of fairness and equity are directly confronted.
		Provide residents, visitors and stakeholders with clear, timely, and accurate information relating to development of the Regional Plan as it progresses.
Review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies described within the public participation plan (PPP).	The RP3 Advisory Group will conduct a systematic evaluation to validate that the strategies used during development of the LRTP are effective.	Develop specific measures used, the timing of, and the process used to evaluate the MPO’s outreach and PPP strategies.
		Upon completion of the LRTP, conduct a full evaluation of the effectiveness of the regional outreach process.
		Ensure that any needed changes to the outreach process are incorporated and documented in the PPP prior to the next LRTP update.
Conduct an active program for outreach to diverse populations throughout the region.	Include diverse socioeconomic groups early in the planning effort.	Examine the location and service area of transportation improvements to ensure that the system adequately and appropriately benefits all groups of the region’s population.
		Provide direct notice of public meetings and public input periods to identified groups of stakeholders as is practicable.
	Develop technical tools to clearly identify the location of diverse populations and associated demographics with particular attention to Environmental Justice areas.	Census and mapping data will be used to identify areas with large concentrations of low income, minority and ethnic populations.
		Using the technical evaluation, contact lists will be updated to ensure that they are sufficiently broad to include identified diverse populations within the regional planning process.
The RP3 Advisory Group will ensure that all information and related materials are easy to access.	Public information meetings will be held in facilities that are centrally located and accessible by persons with disabilities and by as many transportation modes as possible.	

5.H. Evaluation Methods

The effectiveness of the public engagement techniques will be evaluated throughout the biennial TBARTA MPOs CCC Measures of Effectiveness process. The [suggested evaluation measures](#) to determine the performance of these different techniques are relative to the goals set out in this regional public involvement program, and are described in the table below.

Goal	Evaluation Measure
<p>Goal 1. Effective Communication – Focus on proactive, effective, timely, and consistent communication, both within and outside of the CCC/TBARTA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the meetings attended and quantify the number of participants and comments • Track the number of “hits” on the website • Track social media activity • Response time to public inquiries
<p>Goal 2. Trust and Understanding – Build public trust & understanding by producing accurate, clear information to encourage public participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct material evaluation surveys with the Citizens Advisory Committee and the public, request feedback on clarity of information and understanding of projects, etc.
<p>Goal 3. Collaboration – Collaborate and build partnerships with government agencies, civic organizations, and other interested parties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track presentations given to partner agencies, civic organizations, diversity groups, and others • Record number of and details where partnerships are facilitated
<p>Goal 4. Inclusive Engagement – Provide access, be inclusive, and strive to engage all affected populations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map zip codes of meetings • Survey meeting attendees for age, ethnicity, income, gender & employment characteristics • Note number of publications produced in languages other than English
<p>Goal 5. Resourcefulness - Be cost-conscious, economical, and resourceful, while utilizing a variety of techniques to gather input from a diverse population within the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record costs throughout the year spent specifically on public involvement activities, noting where partnerships were utilized, and costs saved, if available.
<p>Goal 6. Meaningful Input – Obtain meaningful public input to inform the decision-making process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer surveys at meetings, via the web or mail on a project basis, or annually, to identify the relative percentage of affected parties that feel the agency provided adequate opportunities for their participation

SECTION 6: APPENDIX

Appendix 6.A - Regional Public Involvement in Florida

The following consists of a compilation of the processes used to assess the effectiveness of five public involvement processes from MPOs around Florida. Each of these MPO programs have been cited by FDOT as examples of effective and proactive PI processes. In that they represent MPOs larger than many within Florida or the Tampa Bay region, it should be noted that some of the smaller MPOs generally have neither the resources or the need to engage the public in a similar manner.

6.A.1 Broward MPO Public Participation Plan - Assessment of The Effectiveness of Public Participation Techniques

The Broward MPO assesses the effectiveness of its public participation techniques to ensure that funds and time invested in public participation activities are achieving their goals. Information is collected from sign-in sheets, and/or surveys or informal conversations with stakeholders, and is used for public events including workshops, displays and outreach activities. All projects and initiatives require an evaluation of the public outreach activities and are conducted on a case by case basis, as evaluations need to consider the context in which the project is being undertaken as well as the communities involved.

Public participation plans developed for projects and initiatives undertaken by the MPO require an evaluation sections. Evaluations are conducted to allow the project team to make mid-course corrections in its approach to public outreach. If the assessment reveals that the public participation goals are not being achieved, then the techniques will be modified or changed. Strategies are frequently discussed and evaluated for improving progress toward public participation goals.

The MPO also produces a report card style approach used as part of the “Speak Up Broward” initiative used to analyze a public outreach campaign. This report card is completed every six months to allow the teams to assess if changes need to be made.

Program goals for several public participation strategies are addressed on the report card and include:

- Media
- Website
- Engagements and Coordination
- Cost-Effectiveness
- Engagement Contacts

6.A.2. Hillsborough MPO Public Participation Plan - Public Participation Evaluation

The MPO has found that “evaluation is necessary to determine the effectiveness of the PPP.” To that end, the MPO strives to ensure that it is responsive to public concerns, which raises the following questions:

- To what degree is the community participating in public involvement opportunities?
- Are we reaching our target audience and key constituencies?
- Are MPO documents effective and informative tools for public awareness?

Answers to these questions are addressed using an analytical evaluation process through which “new and improved strategies and techniques can be developed to improve the overall performance of the public involvement process.”

Measures of Effectiveness

Following are measures of effectiveness considered in the bi-annual evaluation of the process. Several new evaluation criteria have recently been added to the existing measures, including:

- Measuring Visibility & Productivity
- Measuring Participation Opportunities
- Increasing Public Participation Efforts with Minorities, Low-Income Individuals, & the Transportation Disadvantaged
- Measuring Public Interest & Feedback
- Measuring Input Results

The results of this analysis are presented to the MPO Board every other year and posted on the MPO’s website.

6.A.1. MetroPlan Orlando - Public Involvement Process Measurement

In that it encompasses a three-county area - Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties – MetroPlan is one of the few MPOs in Florida that is a “true” regional transportation planning agency. As such, it is a “forum for local elected officials, transportation experts and members of the community to work together to improve mobility for residents, businesses and visitors” for a large and diverse metropolitan area which also has a unique set of attractions that create a nationwide, and even worldwide, draw to the area.

The MetroPlan PPP includes objectives, strategies and measurement tools for the organization’s public involvement program, and demonstrates the MPO’s commitment to using visualization techniques to ensure content is clear, concise, and easy to understand, and relies on its website, MetroPlanOrlando.org, to provide easy access to information – including (but not limited to) activities, plans, and upcoming meetings.

MetroPlan also uses as *Public Involvement Evaluation Dashboard* to provide a process for public involvement staff to consider all activities during the past year and compare them to the goals, objectives, strategies and tools outlined in the adopted Public Involvement Plan. This process allows the organization to adjust strategies to maximize the effectiveness of outreach to the community and refine available resources.

6.A.2. Miami-Dade MPO - Public Participation Plan Evaluation Methodology

No other area in Florida has a population as large or diverse as the Miami-Dade metropolitan area. Following is a chart and depicting the techniques for evaluating the MPO’s PPP. The flow chart page 23 illustrates steps for implementing the PPP, as a way to identify ways to improve new PI strategies and to show which techniques are successful.

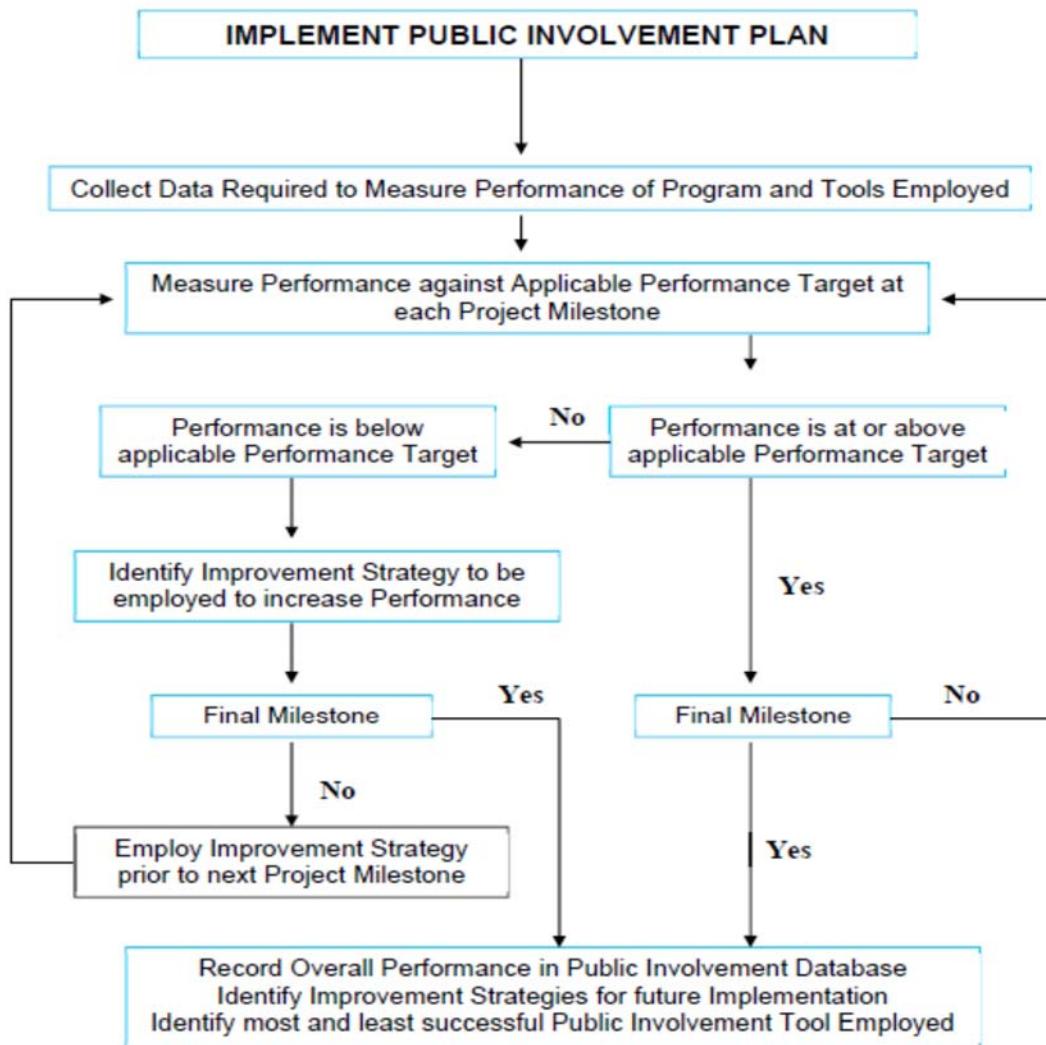
The MPO regards public involvement as “an integral process that tries to involve all persons in a community, regardless of race, income, or status being affected positively or negatively by a future transportation project.” Hence, the process is a “two-way communication aimed at incorporating the views, concerns, and issues of the public into the transportation decision making process, and it is on-going in all phases of a project. It allows the public to hear and be heard.” Furthermore, the MPO views the PPP as a means “for providing citizens, affected public agencies,

representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the Metropolitan transportation planning process.”

6.A.3 Palm Beach MPO - Public Involvement Plan Development, Update and Evaluation

The Palm Beach MPO has an extensive PIP evaluation process that applies several strategies and techniques, indicators, performance objectives, and strategies to achieve performance objectives, and believes that transportation planning must be done with the public’s full involvement. Of particular note, the Broward PIP contains the following assessment of public involvement techniques done for the southeast Florida region. The Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC), serves as the formal forum for policy coordination and communication to carry out the regional initiatives agreed upon by the Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade MPOs.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN EVALUATION PROCESS EVALUATION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLS



6.B. BEST PRACTICES: NATIONAL EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Several MPOs have been cited over the past few years as having public involvement programs that are effective at the regional level – that is, they deal with large, usually diverse, metropolitan areas. Each of these examples provide insight into dealing with complex issues of reaching segments of the public that vary widely on opinions about the current transportation system, how well different populations are being served, how future improvement will meet the needs of different and diverse communities.

While these PI programs are being particularly effective, one major difference between the Tampa Bay region and the examples cited herein is that most programs are based within a single entity having sole responsibility for conducting MPO public participation for the entire metropolitan planning area - whereas the CCC/TBARTA program coordinates a public involvement for six MPOs over an eight-county area. Coordination takes time and energy, as well as funding.

The following MPOs have been cited by public involvement practitioners, that is, peers and peer groups, as well as professional organizations such as AAMPO or NARC. Additionally, both the TRB and AAMPO have committees/working groups which are further examining public involvement practices.

In some cases, program elements that are relevant to the challenges facing the Tampa Bay Region have been emphasized. For the purpose of this report, the following organizations are reviewed:

- Atlanta Regional Commission
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Fredericksburg Area MPO
- Las Vegas MPO
- San Antonio (Alamo Area MPO)

These examples can also serve as a resource when looking at potential public involvement strategies to apply in the Tampa Bay region.

6.B.1 Atlanta Regional Commission (Arc – The Atlanta Area MPO)

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) conducts a comprehensive planning program for a particularly large and complex metropolitan area consisting of a 10-county region and a 2016 population of 4,401,800 persons. The ARC also serves as the MPO for the 18-county Atlanta urbanized planning area.

To coordinate transportation and other planning programs, ARC conducts a Community Engagement Coordination and Networking Coordination program which functions internally between ARC focus areas and with ARC external partners and the general public as well. This process provides for **internal and external community engagement coordination and networking** and is a resource for and developer of creative community engagement on matters of public policy, plans and programs. Information areas considered in this network are communication, education, market research, media relations, community involvement and evaluation.

Programs are formed through a **Regional Advisory Group** composed of community engagement practitioners, communications professionals and civic leadership, as well as county/city representatives, social equity representatives, homeowner's representatives and/or others from the public. Public involvement staff related that events are intended to directly engage different

demographic groups. To this end, ARC has developed a process that applies a variety of techniques suited to reaching large audiences, while not sacrificing contact and input from component groups with a wide range of different perspectives.

Over the last 1-1/2 years, the Atlanta Regional Commission has had 22,000+ interactions via online, phone, and personal touch points to inform three policy dimensions of The Region's Plan. Some of the events/tools used to reach out into this large metropolitan area include:

- Online Surveys
- Building Opportunity Workshops
- Equitable Target Area Workshops
- Building Opportunity Workshop #1: A Conversation on Poverty and Transportation Access in Metro Atlanta
- Building Opportunity Workshop # 2: Livability Through an Equitable Lens

Other “community conversations” include:

- **Community Policy Discussion Groups** - More than 105 individuals from community groups that advocate on behalf of ethnic minorities, public safety, bicycle and pedestrian needs, as well as aging services.
- **Metro Atlanta Speaks** - This public opinion telephone survey has statistical significance down to the county-level with 400 or more respondents in each of the 10 counties surveyed.
- **The Regional Plan Pop-Up Open Houses** - meetings will be held at a variety of locations throughout the region planned in partnership with local governments to get input at critical times in the planning process.
- **Millennials Advisory Panel** - 135 young adults age 18-35 from throughout the 10-county Atlanta region make up the panel and gathered at a series of self-conducted civic dinner parties to generate lively discussion and gather feedback to share regarding the policies of The Region's Plan.

6.B.2. Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG – the Denver Area MPO)

DRCOG members include more than 50 local governments, each of which has an equal voice. The towns, cities and counties of the region work together to ensure the area remains a great place to live, work and play. DRCOG also has numerous partners, including regional districts; state agencies and departments; the business community; and other stakeholders representing a variety of interests. DRCOG emphasizes the collaborative nature of its program, and actively engages local governments to “establish guidelines, set policy and allocate funding.”

Stakeholder engagement recognizes the need for involvement by the communities in the region – especially those communities traditionally under-represented in planning processes. These communities frequently are those most dependent on transit and most in need of the benefits that transit can bring (including housing opportunity, economic vitality and jobs, and access to needed amenities and services). The main goals for stakeholder engagement were:

- Engage all relevant constituencies – people who have a stake in the process and who may be impacted by the outcome.
- Equip all of these constituencies with the tools and knowledge they need to effectively participate in the planning process.

- Integrate stakeholder engagement with all proposed planning and implementation activities to ensure that stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to influence the outcomes of these activities.
- Create long-term capacity for continued engagement at the regional, corridor and catalytic project-levels.
- Effectively and meaningfully engage communities typically underrepresented in planning processes, including low-income individuals and families, people with limited English proficiency, and communities of color.

6.B.3. Fredericksburg Area MPO (George Washington Regional Commission)

The area is noted for expanding diversity in planning and its commitment to reaching out to all members of the community for their input. As the agency responsible for coordinating the regional transportation planning process, FAMPO ensures that all segments of the population are given the opportunity to become involved with the planning process. Effective planning requires that diverse socioeconomic groups be included early in the planning effort and that their concerns be understood and addressed.

FAMPO has also established a plan to regularly review and evaluate the public involvement program to determine its effectiveness in providing feedback from diverse audiences. As an example, during meetings, attendees may be asked to fill out a simple survey asking them their income level, ethnic background, education level, etc. A similar survey could be used when the public accesses the FAMPO website for information and comments.

6.B.4. Las Vegas MPO (Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada)

The Las Vegas region is also home to a very diverse population encompassing many ethnicities and income levels – all having different needs and expectations regarding mobility. The RTC applies several methods to reach out to public and inform them about activities.

A unique feature of the MPO's program is the presence of a Government Affairs Department that coordinates with the other divisions within the organization and reviews the service, plan, or study that requires public involvement, and then devises a specific public involvement strategy using a broad set of tools, including:

- Public Information Meetings
- Public Hearings
- Public Workshops
- Focus Group/Planning Charrettes
- Special Events
- Open Houses
- Key Person Interviews
- Civic and Community Meetings
- Establish Relationships
- Multi-lingual Communication
- Public Presentation and Visualization
- Notification Method

6.B.5. Puget Sound Regional Council (Seattle Area MPO)

The Puget Sound Regional Council develops policies and makes decisions about transportation planning, economic development, and growth management throughout the four-county Seattle metropolitan area surrounding Puget Sound. The primary goals of the Puget Sound Regional Council's Public Participation Plan are to:

- Articulate how the agency approaches public engagement.
- Ensure early, continuous, and broad public notification about and participation in major actions and decisions by PSRC.
- Receive meaningful public input to inform the decision-making process.

The Puget Sound Regional Council's public involvement procedures are built on the following guiding principles:

- No major public policy decision is reached or large project implemented without significantly affecting someone.
- **Strong solutions are developed through collaboration.**
- Even if a project or policy decision is sensible and beneficial, it must be arrived at properly to be acceptable.
- **People are much more willing to live with a decision that affects different interests unequally if the decision-making process is open, objective and considers all viewpoints.**
- If project or policy staff don't provide all relevant information necessary for an informed decision, the public will rely on — and trust — others.
- Effective public notification and participation takes time and effort, and can be expensive, yet is essential to sound decision-making.
- Early involvement of stakeholders improves information and direction for regional planning decisions.
- Using a variety of public outreach techniques and providing information in multiple formats will help involve a wider audience of interested parties.

6.B.6. San Antonio (Alamo Area MPO)

The Alamo Area MPO provides transportation planning services for the San Antonio metropolitan area with a population of over 2.4 million and the 24th largest metropolitan area in the United State. Similar to other MPOs cited in this report, the San Antonio area has seen a major shift in its demographic characteristics through rapid growth and increased diversity, and was the fastest growing of the ten largest cities in the United States from 2000 to 2010.

The MPO's public involvement program is guided by the following core values, principles, and performance standards:

Core values for the MPO's public participation process include:

- People should have a say in transportation decisions that affect their lives.
- Strive to reflect the interests and meet the process needs of participants.
- Actively seek out and facilitate the participation of all those potentially affected.
- Provide individuals with various options in how they wish to participate.
- Provide usable information to permit the public's participation in a meaningful manner.

Given these principles, the MPO's Public Participation performance standards include:

- Early, proactive and continuous public participation efforts

- Reasonable public access to understandable technical and other information
- Collaborative input on alternatives, evaluation criteria, and mitigation needs
- Open public meetings where matters related to transportation policies, programs, and projects are being considered
- Open access to the decision-making process prior to closure
- Commitment to seeking out and considering the needs of the traditionally underserved population(s)

6.C. REGIONAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – ASSESSMENT OF RPPP RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the CCC Board’s approval of the RPPP document in 2013/14, several significant events have occurred (it should be noted that the TBARTA Board accepted the report, but did not take formal action to approve or adopt the RPPP).

Following is a listing of each objective/activity cited in the RPPP document to support the six goals contained in that report. For cases where the activity/objective was implemented the specific action is noted. This assessment is specifically intended to flag activities that support the regional planning process and have been systematically implemented, as follows:

- Activities in ***bold italic*** have been fully or partially addressed. Actions taken by TBARTA and/or the region’s MPO are listed under each relevant activity.
- All other objectives have yet to be addressed at the regional level.

GOAL 1: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: Focus on proactive, effective, timely, and continuous communication, both within and outside of the CCC/TBARTA.

Objective 1.1 Prepare a checklist or guidance document to ensure that messages are conveyed concisely, consistently, and in a timely manner in plain language, using simple, jargon-free and acronym-free verbiage, clear graphics, and visual images instead of words whenever possible.

Objective 1.2 Re-introduce and promote a joint website by:

a. Displaying a link to webpage on all MPO home pages.

b. Including the web address in MPO and CCC/TBARTA publications.

c. Including the web address on all correspondence and print materials.

Update website regularly (minimum of once per month).

Identify point of contact(s) for more information on regional issues.

- TBARTA maintains and regularly updates its web site, including the TBARTA MPO CCC page. Included on the website is a comprehensive _____ of agency materials, including administrative and project information.

Objective 1.3 Produce a PowerPoint or video overview of the regional transportation planning process.

Objective 1.4 Develop a brochure suitable for inclusion in local materials, new member orientation, and the general public explaining how citizens can participate in the regional transportation planning process.

Objective 1.5 Periodically produce and distribute newsletters in electronic (or blog-style) format to provide information concerning current and planned regional transportation activities, and how the public can participate in them (minimum of one per quarter).

Objective 1.6 Periodically distribute survey questions on regional transportation issues (preferably using Survey Monkey or other web-based platform), via the website and at regional events. Include questions about planning issues, success of the communication process, meeting convenience, etc.

Objective 1.7 Continue to post agenda packets of regular meetings and minutes of past meetings on the website at least one week prior to the meetings.

- TBARTA posts meeting agenda packets and minutes, and strives to have this material available at least one week prior.

Objective 1.8 Develop and use standard timeframes, processes, and templates for public notices and advertisements.

Objective 1.9 Distribute and analyze a bi-annual questionnaire to determine if citizen representatives are satisfied with the support they receive from staff.

Objective 1.10 Maintain a database to record public engagement activities, and comments. Follow up with analysis and plan revisions as needed.

Objective 1.11 Establish and utilize a joint approval process to review and produce CCC/TBARTA documents and materials.

- Formation of the TBARTA MPO CCC has created a unified CCC/TBARTA regional planning program and has eliminated the need for a separate approval process.

GOAL 2: TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING: Build public trust and understanding by producing accurate, clear information to encourage public participation.

Objective 2.1 Ensure that information is made available to agencies and the public throughout project studies, and that such information is as timely, clear, and comprehensive as possible.

Objective 2.2 Ensure that interested parties – including local governments and metropolitan, regional, state, and federal agencies, as well as the general public – know when key decisions will be made, receive advance notice, and have an opportunity to respond and participate before action is taken.

Objective 2.3 Involve the public in key aspects of the master planning process, such as thorough identification of major issues, preferences, and priorities.

Objective 2.4 Use a variety of communication methods and tailor messages to various community and stakeholder preferences.

GOAL 3: COLLABORATION: Collaborate and build partnerships with government agencies, civic organizations, and other interested parties.

Objective 3.1 Initiate a kick-off campaign to establish a regional message and branding for joint CCC/TBARTA regional planning efforts (e.g. regional long-range transportation plan, regional trails, regional priorities, etc.).

Objective 3.2 Continue to expand and update a regional mail database to include postal and electronic mail addresses of interested citizens, organizations, and agencies throughout the region.

- TBARTA maintains a comprehensive regional database of the public, including organizations and agencies.

Objective 3.3 Update the legislators' database as changes occur.

- TBARTA and the region's MPOs maintain databases of state and federal legislators.

Objective 3.4 Continue to provide legislative updates on issues relevant to the concerns of the region, as they occur.

- TBARTA and the region's MPO provide continual updates of regionally significant legislative issues.

Objective 3.5 Use the website and other means, such as social media, to expand partnerships for regional information-sharing and collaboration.

- Social media and websites are used by TBARTA and the region's MPOs to build agency relationships and coalitions to support regional initiatives.

Objective 3.6 Seek event co-sponsorship and cost-sharing opportunities.

- Both TBARTA and the TBARTA MPO CCC have coat-tailed onto other regional events, but have not recently co-sponsored or cost-shared with any events.

Objective 3.7 Continue the working group to meet as needed to monitor public engagement activities and oversee the implementation of the RPPP.

- The RP3 Advisory Group was only recently re-formed to evaluate the current regional PI process and make recommendations for ongoing, unified regional community engagement program.

GOAL 4: INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT: Provide access, be inclusive, and strive to engage all affected populations.

Objective 4.1 Prepare a regional demographic profile to identify various populations that may require special outreach.

Objective 4.2 Ensure that populations that may have been underrepresented in the transportation decision-making process in the past are informed and engaged.

Objective 4.3 Produce all web-based products and printed brochures in formats that are usable by people with limited visual and cognitive abilities wherever possible.

Objective 4.4 Translate key publications into other languages, as identified in the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan.

Objective 4.5 Identify and attend community events, in which citizens might participate, and provide information, presentations, and opportunities to comment on regional planning issues.

Objective 4.6 Continue to select sites for regional events that are close to transit lines and accessible to people with disabilities.

Objective 4.7 Annually review and, if necessary, update the Title VI Policy and LEP Plan.

- The Title VI Policy and LEP Plan were last updated in 2014.

Objective 4.8 Continue efforts to achieve diverse representation on citizen advisory groups to reflect the demographics of the region.

GOAL 5: RESOURCEFULNESS: Be cost-conscious, economical, and resourceful.

Objective 5.1 Increase the diversity of communication methods by using social media and internet-based technologies.

- TBARTA and the region's MPOs maintain social media and internet-based technology as part of their communication strategy.

Objective 5.2 Post events, agendas, and maps to meetings and events on website.

- The TBARTA website maintains a current calendar of TBARTA and TBARTA MPO CCC meetings/events, including agendas and location maps.

Objective 5.3 Continue to make all maps and documents available in electronic formats wherever possible and appropriate to decrease printing and production costs.

- Several regional maps, documents and brochures are available in electronic format.

Objective 5.4 Continue to seek new technology that enables staff and citizens to participate in meetings remotely to reduce travel costs.

Objective 5.5 Identify and make use of existing resources, such as maximizing use of existing communication channels within the community, such as local MPO events and the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council's electronic polling devices.

Objective 5.6 Monitor and record the cost-effectiveness of regional public engagement activities sponsored by the CCC and TBARTA.

GOAL 6: MEANINGFUL INPUT: Obtain meaningful public input to inform the decision making process.

Objective 6.1 Hold (or co-sponsor) annual public hearings for regional priorities, plan adoptions, and/or other purposes.

- The CCC/TBARTA merger has led to a streamlined process wherein the TBARTA MPO CCC holds a joint annual meeting with the Central Florida MPO Alliance. At this meeting, regional priorities (projects, multi-use trails, and TRIP) are considered by the CCC Board and forwarded to the TBARTA Board for final approval.

Objective 6.2 Be responsive to input received from the public, and ensure that issues raised by the public are conveyed, explicitly considered, and responded to by regional decision makers.

- Both the TBARTA and TBARTA MPO CCC Boards receive and consider public input regarding regional issues.

Objective 6.3 Prepare a public engagement strategy at the onset of each individual planning activity or project (e.g. RLRTP, regional priorities, etc.) that outlines the public engagement tools and techniques that will be applied during that planning process.

Objective 6.4 Complete a comment summary form (hard copy or web-based) that describes the nature of public comments and how they were addressed in the project.

6.D. TBARTA AND TBARTA MPOs CCC TITLE VI PROGRAM AND LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PROCEDURE

Title VI Program Form and Limited English Proficiency Procedure

For information on Title VI or LEP compliance, contact Michael A. Case:

By phone: (813) 282-8200 or (800) 998-RIDE (7433)

By mail: 4350 West Cypress Street, Suite 700, Tampa, FL 33607

By email: Michael.Case@tbarta.com

By secure fax: (813) 282-8700

Complaint forms are available on the web at <http://tbarta.com/en/title-vi-program>, in print at MPO/TPO and TBARTA offices, and at all TBARTA MPOs CCC public meetings and events.

Title VI Complaint Procedure

If you believe that you have been excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination based on race, color or national origin under the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) and/or TBARTA MPOs CCC program of services, you may file an official Title IV complaint with the Principal Planner, Michael A. Case, 4350 West Cypress Street, Suite 700, Tampa, FL 33607 or by calling (813) 282-8200. We encourage you to make your complaint in writing.

Please include the following information:

- Your name, address and how to contact you (phone number, email address, etc.)
- How, why, when and where you believe you were discriminated against. Include the location, names and contact information of any witnesses.
- You must sign your letter of complaint

Complaints may also be filed directly with the [Federal Transit Administration](#), the [Department of Fair Employment and Housing](#) and the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#).

- Verbal and non-written complaints received by TBARTA and/or the TBARTA MPOs CCC shall be resolved informally by the TBARTA Title VI Specialist. If the issue has not been satisfactorily resolved through informal means, or if at any time the complainant(s) request(s) to file a formal written complaint, the complainant shall be referred by the TBARTA Title VI Specialist to the FDOT's District Seven Title VI Coordinator / District One Title VI Coordinator for processing in accordance with approved State procedures.

- When appropriate the TBARTA Title VI Specialist will conduct and complete a review of the verbal or non-written allegation(s) and based on the information obtained, will render a recommendation for action in a report of findings to the TBARTA MPOs CCC Staff Directors.

Limited English Proficiency Procedure

TBARTA and the TBARTA MPOs CCC works with MPOs and FDOT to provide language assistance for LEP persons seeking meaningful access to programs as required by Executive Order 13166. A Limited English Proficiency person is one who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

Technical support for the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority and the TBARTA MPOs CCC is provided by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Under Florida's Government in the Sunshine provisions, e-mail addresses may be considered public records. If you do not want your e-mail address released in response to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity; instead contact us by phone or in writing.