

Chapter 1:

Introduction



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This report documents the Pasco County MPO 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP sets forth a vision to address the transportation system needs and cost feasible improvements in Pasco County through the year 2035. The multi-modal plan documented in this report addresses highways, public transportation (transit), bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, and multi-use trails.

BACKGROUND

The 2035 LRTP updates the previous 2025 LRTP adopted in December 2004. This 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan represents a significant effort to address the long term transportation needs of Pasco County and the greater Tampa Bay area. Key highlights of this plan include:

- Identification of funding for over \$9.7 billion for transportation improvements from 2015 to 2035.
- Development of over \$1 billion for public transportation service and improvements including implementation of key elements of the TBARTA Mid-Term Master Plan. These improvements include light rail, bus rapid transit, and express bus service on key regional roadways.
- Significant investment in the SR 54 / SR 56 corridor resulting in over \$870 million in capital improvements. The improvements in this corridor are intended to address the anticipated intense development forecasted to occur in this area of the county.

Additional aspects of the Long Range Transportation Plan are identified in later chapters of this report.

OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN

Including this Introduction, the 2035 LRTP Update is organized into 14 chapters. The remaining chapters are summarized below.

Chapter 2 Goals & Objectives presents the MPO's policy-related goals, objectives, and measures of effectiveness that were adopted by the MPO to guide the plan development process. Measures of effectiveness are used to determine if the objectives are being achieved.

Chapter 3 Plan Development Process presents the 2035 LRTP development process. Included is a summary of the approach and planning assumptions used in developing the plan.

Chapter 4 Forecasting Growth and Land Use provides a summary of the forecasted growth and land use in Pasco County. The population and employment projections used in the planning assumptions and modeling are presented along with the methodology used for allocating growth to areas throughout Pasco County.

Chapter 5 Cost and Revenue Assumptions presents the cost and revenue assumptions used to determine the budget for the transportation improvement projects in the county to be included as part of the Cost Affordable Plan.

Chapter 6 Needs Plan presents the 2035 Needs Plan, which includes *all* transportation improvement projects need in the county, as indicated by either the transportation model or during public workshops. This chapter also describes how projects were chosen from the Needs Plan to be included in the Cost Affordable Plan.

Chapter 7 Cost Affordable Plan presents the 2035 Cost Affordable Plan. The Cost Affordable Plan includes the highest priority projects that can be feasibly funded and how the plan complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Chapter 8 Performance Evaluation presents the performance evaluation of the 2035 LRTP Update. Performance measures are included for highway congestion and alternative modes. Environmental mitigation efforts and air quality attainment also are described in this chapter.

Chapter 9 Congestion Management Process and Safety summarizes congestion management process and safety considerations and activities in Pasco County. This includes the MPO's updates to the Mobility Management System and its integration into the metropolitan planning process. Transportation safety also is addressed in this chapter.

Chapter 10 Public Participation summarizes the public participation efforts that played a major role in shaping the 2035 LRTP Update. A summary of public comments is provided, along with an overview of how public input impacted the plan.



Chapter 11 Regional Transportation Plan presents the Regional Transportation Plan developed by the Chairs Coordinating Committee and other regional coordination efforts. This includes regional goals and objectives, as well as the identification and prioritization of regional transportation projects, including highway, public transportation, and multi-use trails.

Chapter 12 Socio-Cultural Effects and Environmental Justice presents the assessment of the Socio-cultural effects undertaken as part of the 2035 LRTP Update.

Chapter 13 Transportation Safety and Security makes recommendations on how the MPO can enhance safety and security measures throughout the transportation system.

Chapter 14 Plan Implementation documents issues and activities the MPO may consider addressing in future planning efforts. This LRTP was developed to comply with the MPO’s Public Involvement Plan, The Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is a plan that is adopted by the MPO separately from the LRTP and is to be implemented in all transportation planning activities of the MPO, in addition to and including this LRTP.

MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

SAFETEA-LU has enhanced the public involvement and outreach requirements that once were a part of the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the previous transportation act. SAFETEA-LU requires that the public have “full and open access” in the development of MPO plans and that the public involvement process be documented in a PIP.

The PPP for Pasco County was created to reflect SAFETEA-LU requirements and enable the citizens affected by changes in the county’s transportation system to have their thoughts and ideas considered. Through the PPP, the Pasco County MPO strives for greater public understanding for the transportation planning process and more cohesive support for the ultimate decisions.

The Pasco County MPO upholds the policy that all persons, regardless of race, sex, national origin, age, religion, or physical condition, shall have full and complete access to the planning process. The PPP and the strategies included therein are designed with consideration of that goal.

Following is an overview of the PPP and the administrative responsibilities associated with implementing the public involvement process for the LRTP. The MPO has developed a proactive program that encourages public input and involvement during the transportation plan development process. The PPP uses the following techniques to facilitate the public involvement process:

- Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings
- MPO Board meetings (televised)
- Public workshops and transportation fairs
- Public Involvement Plan mail list
- MPO publications
- Public Media Coverage
- Public surveys/comments forms
- Pasco County website
- Visualization techniques
- Special efforts for under-served/under-represented
- Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process (ETDM)
- Consultation with State and local officials
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

The Pasco County MPO Board adopted an updated PPP on March 11, 2010. The updated PPP addresses guidance from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Table 1-1 summarizes the 11 public involvement requirements set forth in SAFETEA-LU and how each requirement was met in the development of this LRTP.

	SAFETEA-LU Requirement	Where/How Requirement was Met
1	Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised.	The final public comment period was opened on October 8, and closed on December 10, 2009, for a total of 63 days.
2	Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other interested parties, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, and the segment of the community affected by transportation plans, programs, and projects including, but not limited to, central city and other local jurisdictions.	This LRTP was presented at various stages of development at the monthly TAC, CAC, and MPO meetings.
3	Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans, TIPs, and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered.	Technical and Policy information can be found in documents that are accessible to the public on the MPO’s website.
4	Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points including, but not limited to, approval of plans and TIPs.	Public notices were published before each workshop described in this chapter and are included in the Appendices 10A, 10B, and 10C.
5	Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes.	All comments received during public workshops conducted for the purpose of developing this LRTP are documented in this chapter and its corresponding appendices.
6	Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems including, but not limited to, low-income and minority households in an effort to ensure that the requirements of Title VI and Environmental Justice have been met during the planning and project process.	Two workshops were held for the purpose of considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, and are documented in Chapter 12 of this report.
7	When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP.	All comments received during public workshops conducted for the purpose of developing this LRTP are documented in this chapter and its corresponding appendices.
8	If the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available.	This LRTP does not differ significantly from the one made available for public comment.
9	Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in ensuring that the process provides full and open access to all.	The public involvement process used in this LRTP has been evaluated using the Public Involvement Feedback Form found in the Technical Appendix.
10	These procedures will be reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) during certification reviews for Transportation Management Areas, and as otherwise necessary for all MPOs, to ensure that full and open access is provided to the MPO decisionmaking processes.	The MPO will assist the FHWA/FTA in the compliance review.
11	Metropolitan public involvement plan shall be coordinated with Statewide and regional public involvement plans wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.	This LRTP has been developed in coordination with the Regional CCC LRTP (Chapter 11) and the TBARTA Master Plan (Chapters 6,7)

Table 1-1: SAFETEA-LU Requirements



ADOPTION OF THE PLAN

The LRTP documented in this report was adopted by resolution on December 10, 2009, by the Pasco County MPO Board.

MPO PROGRAM MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

The MPO Program Management Handbook is provided by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to guide the transportation planning processes of Florida MPO's, per the guidance offered by federal regulation.

Yellow boxes such as this are found throughout this LRTP document. The text within these yellow boxes indicate how the following section is compliant with the federal regulations regarding the LRTP set forth in the MPO Program Management Handbook.

The requirement will be stated in orange text such as this.

The identification of where the compliance is found in the chapter is written in this format.

PASCO COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION RESOLUTION NO. 10-95

A RESOLUTION OF THE PASCO COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ADOPTING THE UPDATED 2035 COST-AFFORDABLE LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN; CERTIFYING THE PLAN AS THE OFFICIAL LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR PASCO COUNTY, FLORIDA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the responsible entity for conducting a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning program for Pasco County, Florida; and

WHEREAS, under Federal and State regulations, the MPO has, as one of its primary duties, the responsibility for developing and adopting an updated 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) conforming to the requirements of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users; and

WHEREAS, the MPO has conducted an extensive public participation and involvement program throughout the 2035 LRTP development process, including advertised public workshops and hearings, has provided a significant comment period prior to taking final action on the 2035 LRTP in accordance with the adopted Public Involvement Plan, and has held the required, duly noticed public hearing on December 10, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the 2035 LRTP identifies project costs and reasonably available revenues to fund projects to assure the 2035 LRTP's cost affordability; and

WHEREAS, the MPO has coordinated the 2035 development with all involved State, regional, and local agencies, including consideration of locally adopted comprehensive plans and the Florida Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the MPO has fully supported the development of a regional transportation plan through participation in the Florida Department of Transportation's Regional Transportation Analysis, the West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee, and the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority Regional Transportation Master Plan, thereby providing for the region's mobility needs and ensuring coordinated planning for inter-County corridors and transportation needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the MPO, in regular session duly assembled on this 10th day of December, 2009, and having fulfilled all Federal and State requirements, certifies that the 2035 LRTP is the adopted transportation plan for Pasco County and, as such, shall be a basis for future plans, programs, and policies of the Pasco County MPO.

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

DONE AND RESOLVED this 10th day of December, 2009.

(SEAL) PASCO COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

ATTEST: BEVERLY BEERON MICHAEL COX, CFP®, CHAIRMAN

PAULA S. O'NEIL, CLERK AND COMPTROLLER

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM AND SUFFICIENCY
Office of the Pasco County Attorney

W. Elizabeth Blank ATTORNEY

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Figure 1-1: LRTP Resolution

