

**HILLSBOROUGH, PASCO, & PINELLAS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS**

**2009 TRI-COUNTY ACCESS PLAN UPDATE**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	ES-1
BACKGROUND .....	ES-2
STATUS OF PROJECTS FUNDED TO-DATE UNDER JARC AND NF PROGRAMS.....	ES-2
PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.....	ES-3
UNMET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND BARRIERS TO COORDINATION .....	ES-5
JARC/NF PROGRAM TARGET AREAS.....	ES-6
TCAP STRATEGIES.....	ES-9
APPLICATION RATING CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF PROJECT(S) FOR FUNDING .....	ES-16
CONCLUSION .....	ES-16

## INTRODUCTION

In August 2005, the President enacted the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Bill that provides transportation funding for the following programs that apply to this locally coordinated human services transportation plan (LCHSTP).

- **Special Needs of Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities (E&D) 5310** funding program provides funding, allocated by a formula, to states for capital projects to assist in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and persons with disabilities.
- **Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) 5316** funding program provides formula funding to states and designated recipients to support the development and maintenance of job access projects designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment. The JARC program also supports reverse commute projects designed to transport residents of urbanized and non-urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities.
- **New Freedom (NF) 5317** funding program is newly established in SAFETEA-LU. The purpose of the New Freedom program is to provide new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). These new services are intended to fill the gaps between human service and public transportation services previously available and to facilitate the integration of individuals with disabilities into the workforce and full participation in the community.

The SAFETEA-LU legislation requires that projects selected for funding under the E&D, JARC, and NF programs be derived from an LCHSTP. The LCHSTP must be developed through a process that includes representatives of the public, private and nonprofit transportation providers, human services providers, and participation by the public. The LCHSTP should contain enough information on the local demographic and markets to be used as a tool for implementing the most needed services to have the highest impact on improving transportation for the covered populations.

### Partnership for Sustainable Communities

On June 16, 2009, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) joined with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to create the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The partnership was developed to help improve access to affordable housing, develop more transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment in communities nationwide. The EPA, HUD, and DOT developed six livability principles to help achieve the partnership's goals. The partnership's six guiding livability principles were incorporated into the LCHSTP and used as a basis for conducting various public outreach activities.

## **BACKGROUND**

This executive summary is a brief overview of the update to the Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas County LCHSTP also known as the Tri-County Access Plan (TCAP), the name chosen by the public during previous outreach activities. The TCAP was developed in 2007 by the Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7 to meet the criteria outlined in the SAFETEA-LU legislation regarding JARC, NF, and E&D funding programs. The three MPOs, herein after referred to as the Hillsborough, Pasco, & Pinellas MPOs decided to improve upon coordinated transportation services for the Tampa Bay area by prioritizing, selecting, and funding human services transportation projects. By combining resources, the MPOs were able to leverage the available funding and support projects of regional significance that serve the target populations, as well as projects that can improve local transportation services.

In previous years the FDOT has received and administered the E&D program while the MPOs have administered the JARC and NF programs. In preparation for the possibility of utilizing one grant application process for E&D, JARC, and NF, this TCAP Update includes unmet needs and strategies to address the capital transportation needs of the elderly and disabled populations. FDOT staff participated in the TCAP public involvement efforts, development of the project rating criteria, and will serve on the project selection committee.

## **STATUS OF PROJECTS FUNDED TO-DATE UNDER JARC AND NF PROGRAMS**

The tri-county area's JARC and NF funding cycle began in fiscal year 2006. The MPOs opened the competitive application selection process in 2007 and awarded funding to a variety of projects designed to address the tri-county area's unmet transportation needs as documented in the initial TCAP. The projects that received funding for implementation are described below. In addition, Table ES-1 presents the amount of JARC and NF funding awarded to each subrecipient.

### **Job Access and Reverse Commute**

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit – Late night weekday and weekend service on 8 routes and weekend only service on 4 routes that connect low-income workers with employment opportunities.

Hillsborough County Sunshine Line – Transportation for low-income residents to work and work-related activities such as job training and interviews.

Family Service Centers – Small loans through the Ways to Work program for low-income working parents to purchase cars or car repairs.

Pinellas County MPO – Program administration and planning.

## New Freedom

Center for Independence – Implementation, continuation, and expansion of a combination of fixed-route and on-demand bus services that links the existing public transportation with developmentally disabled service providers. This service also connects to public transportation services in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties.

Center for Independence – Funding for an additional outreach worker and the purchase of new technology to improve ridership.

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit – Construction of 20 ADA compliant bus pads and sidewalk improvements at sites that meet a combination of high ridership usage, key destinations including employment, and a need for ADA compatible improvements.

Neighborhood Care Network –Implementation and expansion of the EZride program which is a pre-paid fee for a volunteer-based transportation program that enhances the quality of life for the elderly and disabled populations by providing more transportation options to community activities.

Harbor Behavioral Health Care Institute – Provision of a comprehensive educational, training, and information program to increase the use of fixed-route transit by people in the New Freedom target populations through the implementation of a Transportation Awareness Program (TAP).

Pinellas County MPO – Program administration and planning.

**Table ES-1**  
**Tri-County Area Grant Recipient Funding 2006-2009<sup>1</sup>**

Grant Recipient	Grant Programs		Total
	JARC	NF	
HART	1,665,107	700,000	2,365,107
Center for Independence	-	589,231	589,231
Hillsborough County	1,855,735	-	1,855,735
Neighborhood Care Network	-	663,045	663,045
Harbor Behavioral Health	-	232,502	232,502
Family Resource Center	404,856	-	404,856
Pinellas County MPO	316,995	187,334	504,329
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>4,242,693</i>	<i>2,372,112</i>	<i>6,614,805</i>
Remaining Grant Funds	194,041	647,441	841,482

<sup>1</sup>For more detailed information regarding the distribution of JARC and NF funds please see the Pinellas County MPO's Program of Projects.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The public participation process included a series of interactive public workshops conducted at locations throughout the tri-county planning region. Depending on the number of meeting attendees, participants were divided into break-out groups so that interactive discussions regarding the current

state of local and regional public transportation services could be facilitated. Specifically, the groups were asked to identify problems (i.e., gaps, overlaps, deficiencies) in public transportation services. They were further asked to identify these issues as they affect various segments of the population including the elderly, the disabled, and the transportation disadvantaged. The participants were then asked to provide strategies or solutions for the issues they identified. In total, approximately 37 problems and 19 solutions were identified.

The participants at the Pinellas County public workshop identified the greatest number of “problems” and “solutions”; therefore, the workshop participants were each given six sticker dots and asked to individually prioritize the problems and solutions by marking the top three problems and the top three solutions. All priority dots allocated to responses were tallied to determine the priorities.

The top three “problems” that emerged from the compilation of the Pinellas County workshop results were (1) Transportation services are too limited in the evenings and weekends; (2) There is a need for one eligibility process for all applications and a centralized one stop center; and (3) Some operators have a lack of sensitivity towards the elderly and disabled transit users.

Based on the number of sticker dots given to each solution, four major solutions emerged from the prioritization exercise. The top four “solutions” that emerged from the compilation of the breakout activity results are (1) Develop a one stop center for information, training, and brochures that list all of the available programs; (2) Develop a “How to Ride” guide for the available transportation programs utilizing funding from the administration portion of the grant; (3) Establish a coordinated eligibility program; and (4) Implement a sales tax to fund the provision of transit service to all three counties.

In addition to the public workshops and in recognition of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an Employer Forum, an Affordable Housing Forum, and stakeholder interviews were also conducted to obtain input relating to the tri-county area’s employment and affordable housing needs. The Pinellas County MPO also hosted and updated a TCAP website to provide information relating to the TCAP update process. The website includes the previous plan and provider inventory, an overview, the technical memorandums, and other documents related to the TCAP Update. Contact information for comments or questions and the FTA circulars for E&D, JARC, and NF are also available on the website.

Overall, many needs and priorities were discussed during the public outreach activities, but the most common discussions revolved around the need for knowledge about the existing transportation options, the need for cross county services both fixed-route and demand response, the need for a dedicated transit funding source, the need for improved frequencies, later evening service, and increased weekend service on the existing transit system. During the forums and the stakeholder interviews, the affordable housing and workforce representatives reemphasized the need for later evening hours that accommodate shift work, cross county transit service to improve access to jobs and housing, improved efficiency on the existing transit system, and more funding for housing and transportation. Based on the public input process, there is also a need for further coordination

between the tri-county area's local governments and the transportation and economic development planning process.

## **UNMET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND BARRIERS TO COORDINATION**

The tri-county area has an extensive transportation network comprised of public, non-profit, and private transportation providers; however, unmet transportation needs and barriers to coordination still exist. The following similar issues and unmet needs with transportation service delivery have been identified within the tri-county area:

- Due to the limited amount of existing fixed-route service in Pasco County, more emphasis is placed upon additional fixed-route services and intra-county connections. The transit services in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties are more extensive; therefore, the focus can be on system service growth, premium services, and capital improvements.
- The additional non-profit and private transportation providers assist the overall network by filling gaps in service, but are very specific in the populations they serve or are too expensive to expand to serve the remaining needs of tri-county residents.
- Due to limited TD funding, primarily medical and other life sustaining trips are provided. This illustrates a need for additional funding to support TD trips for other purposes.
- Transportation funding has been cited as one of the main barriers to providing transportation access, making this one of the greatest unmet needs of the tri-county region.
- There is a lack of coordination between job access and the provision of transportation services.
- Requirements for agency transportation providers are not consistent or necessarily required in local contracts with the CTC. Accordingly, many funding agencies opt for service outside of the system, despite the lower service standards.
- No standard rate structure or performance standards.
- No consistent or standard policies, procedures, or contracts for all public transportation providers.
- There are not enough private operators providing service in the coordinated system. Additional operators would create competition, lower trip costs, and improve overall efficiency.
- High concentrations of unemployed persons (>8 %) exist throughout the tri-county area. The current economic conditions have significantly affected the Florida job market.

- Mapping analysis indicates that Hillsborough County has 47 major destinations outside of the HART ¼-mile service area, Pasco County has 44 major destinations outside of the PCPT ¼-mile service area, and Pinellas County has 12 major destinations outside of the PSTA ¼-mile service area.

## **JARC/NF PROGRAM TARGET AREAS**

From an analysis of transit needs, based upon existing services and the concentration of targeted populations, the following areas within each county have been identified as priority areas for increased mobility options. The areas for JARC and NF eligible activities were chosen based upon a high percentage of target populations combined with a lack of existing transportation service.

### **Hillsborough County**

- North Tampa - The highest number and density of transportation disadvantaged trips are provided in Central Tampa, North Tampa (along Fletcher Ave), and Brandon.
- Plant City - Due to a lack of funding, the local service in Plant City has been suspended. According to the GIS analysis, several major destinations are located within the Plant City area and are currently without transit service.
- Northeast Hillsborough – The northeast portion of the County has very limited public transit service and should be reviewed for additional transportation options.
- South County – Stakeholders have indicated that the South County area is experiencing housing growth through the Rural Development program. Since this area has limited or no public transit available, HART is exploring the possibility of implementing flex routes within South County.
- Westshore District– The HART TDP documented a need for increased service to the Westshore area. In addition, workforce representatives commented that future employment opportunities are planned for the Westshore area.
- Temple Terrace – Temple Terrace is proximate to the University of South Florida and Bush Gardens Tampa Bay. This area could benefit from additional transportation services and extended service hours providing access to job opportunities.
- North Hillsborough County – The northern area of Hillsborough County has very limited public transportation service including one HART express route into South Pasco County.
- Seffner – The North Grove Association affordable housing facility and the Seffner Senior Center are both located in Seffner and are outside of the ¼-mile transit service area. The



Brandon Senior Center is also proximate to this area and located outside of the ¼-mile buffer defining transit accessibility.

## **Pasco County**

- Lacochee – This area of Pasco County is characterized by high concentrations of unemployed (>8 %), disabled (30-50 %), and elderly (>30 %) populations. The area surrounding Lacochee appears to have a similar demographic make-up.
- West Pasco County – The western portion of the County has a high elderly population. Bayonet Point and New Port Richey have high concentrations of disabled, elderly (>30%), unemployment (>8 %), and low-income populations (>100).
- US 301 & CR 41 – The area southwest of Lacochee and Macon is comprised of large segments of elderly, disabled, and unemployed populations. There are currently no transit services available within this area.
- North Central Pasco County – Many major employers are located in the central portion of the County. The entire central portion of Pasco County is without transit service.
- Trinity – Trinity is located near the Pinellas County Line. The area contains two medical facilities and several industrial and corporate parks located outside of the ¼-mile transit service area.
- Odessa – Odessa is located to the east of Trinity. This area also contains employment opportunities and industrial parks.
- Land O’ Lakes & Wesley Chapel – PCPT’s TDP identified the need for a local circulator in Land O’ Lakes, fixed-route service in Wesley Chapel, and fixed-route service between Zephyrhills and Wesley Chapel.
- Southeastern Pasco County – The segment located southeast of Zephyrhills extending to the Polk County Line contains high concentrations of low-income households (>100) and elderly persons (>30 %). This area is currently without any transit service.
- Pasco County has the largest number of unserved major employers, hospitals and affordable housing locations by public transit in the tri-county region. The following major destinations within Pasco County do not have public transit access, including:
  - Saddlebrook Resort
  - Pasco Woods
  - Saint Leo University
  - The Pasco County School District

- Several industrial and business parks are located across Pasco County
- Morton Plant Mease Trinity Outpatient
- Children's Rehabilitation Center
- CARES Crescent Senior Center
- Baldomero Lopez State Veterans
- Royal Oak Nursing Home
- Heritage Park
- Madison Pointe Rehabilitation and Health Center

## Pinellas County

- Baycare Health System, Inc. is the only major employer in Pinellas County without existing transit service. Baycare Health System, Inc., is located southwest of the Bayside Bridge in Clearwater.
- The Landings at Boot Ranch West, UPARC Housing IV, Riverside Apartments, Graham Park, the Hampton Apartments, St. Andrews Cove Condominiums, Mango Circle Apartments, Oak Trace, and Melrose on the Bay are all affordable housing location outside of the PSTA ¼ mile buffer. Riverside Apartments are located within the ¼-mile service area for PCPT's Route 19 in Tarpon Springs.
- Two major senior centers have no existing direct transit service: Bethlehem Center in Largo and Palm Harbor Community Activity Center in Palm Harbor.

The areas discussed below were identified through a GIS mapping analysis of the existing services, unmet needs, and locations of the target populations. The following locations are priority areas for Pinellas County.

- Dunedin – Parts of Dunedin have no existing public transit services.
- Clearwater – This area of Pinellas County has a high percentage of elderly and disabled residents comprising its total population. Additional weekend service, especially Sunday services, should be considered for parts of Clearwater.
- East Lake – Additional service including weekend service should be considered for the East Lake and Safety Harbor areas.

Other transit related needs that would improve services to disabled, elderly, and/or low-income persons and have been identified by PSTA in its 2007-2011 Transit Development Plan Major Update and the PSTA 2009 TDP Minor Update include:

- East Lake/McMullen Booth Rd (New Route 62X)

- New service along the following corridors:
  - CR 1 and Tampa Rd
  - 54th Ave North, east of US 19
  - Highland Ave north of East Bay Dr
  - East Lake Rd north of Boot Ranch
  
- Express service to support the large volume of commuter trips originating in Pasco and Manatee Counties, along with the development of Park-and-Ride infrastructure.
  
- Improved service to Tampa International Airport
  
- An enhanced bus network concept that includes:
  - Circulator and feeder service to: Downtown Clearwater, US 19/Roosevelt Blvd, Seminole, Largo Mall, Tyrone Square Mall, Downtown St. Petersburg, and Park Side Mall
  - Trolley service from Tarpon Springs to St. Pete Beach
  - Premium service from Hillsborough County, Oldsmar, and Dunedin

## TCAP STRATEGIES

Based on public input and a technical analysis of the tri-county area's unmet transportation needs, the following strategies were developed to achieve the TCAP goals and address the existing needs and barriers to coordination. During the JARC, NF, and E&D project selection process, the TCAP strategies will be considered the priorities for awarding funding. Projects submitted for JARC, NF, and/or E&D funding that address the TCAP strategies will receive additional consideration during the project selection process.

- Create a transportation network comprised of fixed-route, vanpool / carpool, and shuttle services that allows for expanded mobility in the evening hours and on weekends.
- Improve coordination among public transit providers, human services agencies, and volunteer-based driver programs to provide greater mobility throughout the tri-county area.
- Obtain additional funding for transit by pursuing grant opportunities, creating partnerships with local governments, and establishing transit funding taskforces.
- Improve access to information about available transportation options and coordinate eligibility processes.
- Create a network of transportation options that provides more personal service for persons with disabilities.
- Establish a centralized location that provides information, training, and brochures explaining the available transportation options in the tri-county area and coordinated eligibility.
- Improve ADA accessibility and mobility throughout the tri-county area.

- Improve mobility and accessibility to transportation options in rural areas and areas without public transportation.
- Expand the availability of transportation options to provide additional trips for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes.

Table ES-2 includes each strategy, the unmet need addressed by the strategy, the county impacted, potential projects to address the unmet need, the project type, population served, and potential funding sources. Projects that address the TCAP strategies have a higher likelihood of success in being awarded the maximum available points during the JARC, NF, and/or E&D scoring process.

**Table ES-2  
Recommended Priority Strategies**

Strategy	Problem/Unmet Need Addressed	County Impacted	Potential Projects	Project Type	Population Served	Potential Funding Source
A) Create a transportation network comprised of fixed-route, vanpool / carpool, and shuttle services that allows for expanded mobility in the evening hours and on weekends.	Limited transportation services in the evenings. There is a need for later bus service.	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Evaluate existing service to determine if shifts can be made to move services from existing service hours to later evening hours	Planning	All	NF, JARC
	Limited transportation services on the weekend.		Develop a countywide tax to pay for later evening and weekend service	Legislative	All	N/A
	Insufficient paratransit services connecting workers with employers after hours for late evening trips and during the weekend.		Create carpools/vanpools that provide transportation service in the later evening hours to locations that are open beyond the existing fixed-route hours	Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Purchase vehicles for vanpools	Capital	All	NF, JARC
			Expand fixed-route service to later evening hours to accommodate the expressed needs of the TCAP	Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Expand fixed-route service hours and frequency on the weekends to accommodate the expressed needs of the TCAP	Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Purchase additional vehicles for expanded service	Capital		NF, JARC, E&D
			Expand the demand response (paratransit) system hours	Operating		NF, JARC

**Table ES-2 (Continued)  
Recommended Priority Strategies**

Strategy	Problem/Unmet Need Addressed	County Impacted	Potential Projects	Project Type	Population Served	Potential Funding Source
<b>B) Improve coordination among public transit providers, human services agencies, and volunteer-based driver programs to provide greater mobility throughout the tri-county area.</b>	Lack of weekend service for seniors	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Implement or expand volunteer-based transportation programs	Operating	All	NF, JARC
	Insufficient weekend frequencies		Implement cross county fixed-route services	Operating	All	NF, JARC
	Limited weekend service		Expand the paratransit system for cross county travel especially on major corridors to connect to local transportation services	Operating	Paratransit users	NF, JARC
	Lack of inter-county fixed-route and paratransit services		Increase fixed-route evening and weekend hours	Operating	All	NF, JARC
	Insufficient regional connectivity for medical purposes		Purchase accessible vehicles for the expansion of service	Capital	All	NF, JARC, E&D
	Insufficient inter-county travel for fixed-route and paratransit trips		Car loan program to assist in purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared rides	Capital	All	NF, JARC
	Lack of coordination and sharing of resources including church buses and other underused vehicles		Establish agreements for connecting services or sharing rides	Planning	All	NF, JARC
	More buses to accommodate increased services needed		Hire additional staff to coordinate use of vehicles among various agencies	Mobility Management/ Operating	All	NF, JARC
	Lack of sidewalks to allow the elderly and persons with disabilities access to transportation		Purchase replacement vehicles for continued service	Capital	All	NF, JARC, E&D
			Paratransit connections to bus stops	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF

**Table ES-2 (Continued)**  
**Recommended Priority Strategies**

Strategy	Problem/Unmet Need Addressed	County Impacted	Potential Projects	Project Type	Population Served	Potential Funding Source
<b>C)</b> Obtain additional funding for transit by pursuing grant opportunities, creating partnerships with local governments, and establishing transit funding taskforces.	Insufficient funding for increased fixed-route frequencies  Improve spending per capita on transit in comparison to other states  Lack of transportation funding  Lack of 5310 funds for replacement vehicles	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Additional outreach workers to pursue partnership opportunities	Mobility Management/ Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Mobility managers to administer grant processes	Mobility Management	All	NF, JARC
			Develop countywide tax for transit	Legislative	All	N/A
			Transportation forums to educate the public on the benefits offered by public transportation and how transportation is funded.	Operating	All	NF, JARC
<b>D)</b> Improve access to information about available transportation options and coordinate eligibility processes.	Lack of knowledge regarding programs  Insufficient education on available services, various programs, and eligibility requirements	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Joint Transportation Forums	Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Senior Center Programs	Mobility Management/ Operating	Elderly	NF
			Travel Training Programs	Mobility Management/ Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Employer Training Programs	Mobility Management/ Operating	Employer/Employee	JARC
			Centralized One Stop Centers as referenced in strategy F below	Mobility Management/ Operating/ Capital	All	NF, JARC
<b>E)</b> Create a network of transportation options that provides more personal service for persons with disabilities	More personal door-to-door service for the needs of the persons with disabilities  Lack of volunteer drivers  Lack of immediate transportation services for the elderly  Lack of sensitivity towards the elderly and persons with disabilities transit users  Insurance requirements for volunteer drivers are an issue	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Implement new or expand existing volunteer driver programs to provide transportation at various times	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
			Implement volunteer driver programs that can provide personal, door-to-door, and door-through-door services	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
			Circulators or flex route service in communities with moderate to high elderly and/or persons with disabilities populations	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
			Sensitivity training programs for public transportation and paratransit drivers	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
			Lobbying for legislative changes to address issues with insurance requirements for volunteer drivers	Legislative	All	N/A

**Table ES-2 (Continued)  
Recommended Priority Strategies**

Strategy	Problem/Unmet Need Addressed	County Impacted	Potential Projects	Project Type	Population Served	Potential Funding Source
F) Establish a centralized location that provides information, training, and brochures explaining the available transportation options in the tri-county area and coordinated eligibility	<p>No centralized one stop center with one eligibility process for all applications</p> <p>Lack of real-time bus information for those without access to personal digital assistants (PDAs)</p> <p>Some counties do not have brochures/materials containing information on all available programs</p>	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Hire additional staff to provide information on the available transportation services and coordinate eligibility	Mobility Management/ Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Hire a mobility management coordinator to review eligibility criteria for all programs and develop a consolidated application and/or eligibility process	Mobility Management/ Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Implement a travel training program that provides information and training on how to use the available transportation services	Mobility Management/ Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Establish a centralized One Stop Center	Operating/ Capital	All	NF, JARC
			Establish an automatic call system for real time bus information, including information on delays	Operating/ Capital	All	NF, JARC
			Implement a consolidated and coordinated eligibility process	Mobility Management/ Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Develop brochures/materials for each county or region describing available transportation programs	Planning	All	NF, JARC
G) Improve ADA accessibility and mobility throughout the tri-county area	<p>Lack of ADA accessible vehicles in the provision of private transportation services</p> <p>Lack of connecting sidewalks for the elderly and persons with disabilities to access transit services</p> <p>Insufficient access to existing transit services due to non-ADA compliant bus stops and/or bus shelters that were constructed prior to and have not been renovated since the ADA act.</p> <p>Lack of flexibility in the requirements for users of the paratransit system qualified under the ADA program to also utilize the fixed-route system.</p>	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Purchase accessible vehicles for use in taxi, ridesharing, and vanpools	Capital	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
			Operate accessible vehicles for use in taxi, ridesharing, and vanpools	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
			Implement voucher program to subsidize rides for taxi trips or trips provided by other private providers to the elderly and persons with disabilities	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
			Implement circulators or flex routes that are fully accessible	Operating	All	NF, JARC
			ADA accessible transit infrastructure	Capital	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF,
			Sidewalk improvements, curb cuts, and bus pads to improve accessibility	Capital	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF



**Table ES-2 (Continued)  
Recommended Priority Strategies**

Strategy	Problem/Unmet Need Addressed	County Impacted	Potential Projects	Project Type	Population Served	Potential Funding Source
H) Improve mobility and accessibility to transportation options in rural areas and areas without public transportation.	Limited transportation options -in rural areas and areas without public transportation	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Implement increased transportation services that connect rural and urban areas that can utilize NF and JARC funds for urbanized and rural areas	Operating	All	NF, JARC
	Lack of public transit vehicle access to MacDill Air Force Base		Implement voucher program to subsidize rides for taxi trips or trips provided by private operators	Operating	All	NF, JARC
	Lack of fixed-route service to certain areas of the tri-county area		Circulators or flex routes connecting less urban communities to existing fixed-route service	Operating	All	NF, JARC
			Vanpools/carpools	Operating	All	JARC
			Car loan program to assist with purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared rides to employment	Capital	Low-Income Employer/Employee	JARC
			Market the Bay Area Commuter Services program	Operating	Employer/Employee	JARC
I) Expand the availability of transportation options to provide additional trips for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes.	Adult daycare trips and medical trips are needed for the elderly	Hillsborough Pasco Pinellas	Expand the paratransit system and specialized transportation services to adult daycares, medical facilities and dialysis centers throughout the region and to frequently utilized sites outside of the service area where comparable services are not provided within the service area	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
	Insufficient subsidized or in-kind transportation services for low-income seniors		Increase programs to recruit volunteer drivers	Operating	All	NF, JARC
	Lack of volunteer drivers		Expand the paratransit system beyond the ADA-required area at needed times	Operating	Elderly/Persons with disabilities	NF
	Insufficient shopping, recreational, and employment trips on the paratransit systems		Implement vanpool programs to and from employment sites that are not accessible utilizing the existing transportation options	Operating	Employer/Employee	JARC
	Costs of cab rides are too high		Increase fixed-route headways for more frequent service to alleviate reliance on higher cost taxi service	Operating	All	NF, JARC
	The Hillsborough Public Transportation Commission regulations are impacting taxis and volunteer drivers		Purchase additional vehicles for expanded service	Capital	All	NF, JARC, E&D

NOTE: Potential projects are recommendations; this list is not exhaustive of the projects that can be implemented under the grant programs. The projects recommended coincide with the strategy and are not lined up to address a specific unmet need. The unmet needs are identified to show correlations between strategies and projects.

## APPLICATION RATING CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF PROJECT(S) FOR FUNDING

The Hillsborough, Pasco & Pinellas MPOs developed project scoring criteria during the development of the 2007 TCAP. The criteria were used to score the projects selected for funding during previous JARC and NF application cycles. Applications were scored based on the following criteria:

- Project Description, Goals, & Objectives
- Implementation & Operations Plan
- Project Budget
- Coordination and Program Outreach
- Program Effectiveness and Performance
- DBE Participation

As part of the TCAP Update process, the project scoring criteria were revised to give more consideration to projects that address an identified unmet need from the plan and/or coincide with an identified TCAP strategy. Revisions were also made to the project scoring criteria to assign points to projects that incorporate the following elements:

- New or innovative concepts
- Plans for continuing the project after the grant funding cycle
- Utilization of available resources and/or leveraging resources through partnerships
- Coordination with a federal program

A detailed scoring table that includes criteria descriptions and the maximum points possible for each criterion is included in the TCAP Update as Appendix C.

## CONCLUSION

This plan is the first update to the TCAP developed through a partnership between the Hillsborough, Pasco, & Pinellas MPOs, in coordination with FDOT D-7. In coordination with the TCAP guidelines and focusing on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an extensive public involvement process was conducted to reach the maximum number of participant throughout the tri-county area and representatives of affordable housing and workforce agencies. The feedback that was provided by these individuals with regard to transportation deficiencies impacting the targeted groups was very comprehensive. There were no indications of duplications in transportation services. However, a clear and uniform message with regard to the need for additional services was expressed. The additional service needs include local level and regionally coordinated transportation services. Education was another topic discussed in great detail; many individuals and agencies were not aware of some of the existing transportation or human service provisions available in the tri-county region. The lack of information shared between agencies and the general public regarding existing services heightened the communities' awareness as to why coordinated planning needs to occur on increasing levels.

The estimated federal funding for the tri-county urbanized area JARC, NF, and E&D programs are presented below:

- **JARC** - Estimated Fiscal Year 2009 - \$1,310,900
- **NF** - Estimated Fiscal Year 2009 - \$934,532
- **E&D** - Estimated Fiscal Year 2009 - \$1,626,520

The JARC, NF, and E&D funding will require matching funds, but provide a starting point to implement the type of projects that can be added to the existing tri-county area transportation system. The JARC, NF, and E&D funds are for specific use in the urbanized areas of Pasco, Pinellas and Hillsborough County.

A competitive selection of project(s) or program(s) for funding will be conducted for each fiscal year of funding available. Projects selected must be derived from the TCAP Update. After funding is provided, recipients will be required to report on the success of their project(s) or program(s) in meeting the needs of the target populations and the goals and strategies of the plan. Quarterly project updates as requested in the competitive grant application will be required from each JARC, NF, and E&D funded recipient.