

Public Involvement Process Plan

for the

**Capital Region
Transportation Planning Area**

**Adopted by the CRTPA on
January 11, 2010**

Acknowledgements

Document Content

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I.

INTRODUCTION

What is the CRTPA?

The Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) is a multi-jurisdictional metropolitan planning organization (MPO) mandated by federal and state law to provide continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning for the Capital Region. As such, the CRTPA is responsible for the regional transportation planning that guides the future growth and development of Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla Counties.

The CRTPA Board is composed of elected officials who meet on a regular basis to provide direction and make decisions needed to implement transportation projects and strategies. The CRTPA works with its planning and transportation agency partners in Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla Counties, as well as the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), committees, staff, and the public to:

- Identify and evaluate transportation needs in the region;
- Determine the types of studies, strategies, and improvements needed; and
- Develop short- and long-term programs and plans that include schedules, improvement needs, and funding sources.

What is the Vision and Mission of the CRTPA?

The vision of the CRTPA is as follows:

“to create an integrated regional multimodal transportation network that provides the most options for moving people and goods economically, effectively, and safely while protecting the environment, promoting economic development and maintaining a high quality of life with sustainable development patterns.”

To help make this vision a reality, the CRTPA adopted the following mission statement:

“Act as the principal forum for collective transportation policy discussions that result in the development of a long range transportation plan, which creates an integrated regional multimodal transportation network that supports sustainable development patterns and promotes economic growth.”

How does the CRTPA make the vision a reality and carry out its mission?

To carry out the mission and vision of the CRTPA, the CRTPA has developed a public involvement process designed to educate and engage the public during the development and overview of CRTPA work tasks. Through the Public Involvement Process Plan (PIPP), the CRTPA strives to create the cooperative and collaborative transportation planning process that gives citizens a voice in shaping the area’s future.

The PIPP provides the framework for advancing the CRTPA's mission and vision by:

- **Educating and informing the public** about the urban transportation planning process, and the major work tasks of the CRTPA that guide the shape of the region's transportation network;
- Outlining an open and responsive public involvement process to carefully **collect and consider public input** in the transportation decision-making process;
- **Outlining various methods** the CRTPA will use **to increase public awareness** of how transportation systems are planned and constructed, and to increase **public input, interest and participation in transportation planning projects**;
- **Outlining methods to promote, measure, and evaluate the equity in the accessibility of public involvement opportunities** throughout the CRTPA planning boundary, **and to measure the responsiveness of efforts to capture and engage the involvement of citizens from the underserved and minority populations of the area.**

What is the purpose of the CRTPA's Public Involvement Process Plan?

The Public Involvement Process Plan (PIPP) is designed to promote effective education and two-way communication with the public such that strong citizen participation is reflected throughout all of the CRTPA's transportation planning activities. This document also defines the federal guidelines that govern public involvement in the metropolitan transportation planning process, describes the existing CRTPA public participation process for the mandated CRTPA work products, identifies the advisory committee structure for the CRTPA Board, and identifies general ways that the public can engage themselves in the transportation planning processes in this region.

The overall intent of this document is twofold. First and foremost, this document is intended to provide a user-friendly introduction to the CRTPA work tasks to the general public. It is the goal of this document to convey in a simplistic manner the purpose, development schedule, and ways in which the public can become involved in the development and review of the primary work tasks undertaken by the CRTPA. The PIPP serves as a playbook for the general public on how and when the CRTPA will conduct and solicit public involvement throughout the year relating to varying tasks.

Secondly, this document serves as a guidebook for the CRTPA. The document outlines how the CRTPA will solicit, conduct, evaluate, improve, and report public involvement activities in the development of transportation plans and services for Florida's Capital Region. Special attention is paid to how public involvement activities will be tailored to meet the needs of the unique areas within the four-county planning region, including the areas of the underserved and non-English speaking populations.

II. THE CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY

What is a Metropolitan Planning Agency?

A Metropolitan Planning Agency (MPO) is an area-wide, multi-jurisdictional agency mandated by federal and state law for urbanized areas of more than 50,000 people to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive regional transportation planning process. An MPO is responsible for planning and programming in cooperation with local transportation agencies and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), as well as for the expenditure of federal and state transportation funds in an effort to enhance the statewide and regional multimodal transportation system. To achieve this objective, MPOs develop a 20-year Long-Range Transportation Plan to guide future transportation decision-making and a 5-year Transportation Improvement Program to prioritize transportation projects for federal, state, and local funding within their regions.

History of the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency

Initially, the Tallahassee-Leon County Transportation Study, using input from government officials, technical experts, and private citizens, guided transportation planning in the Tallahassee-Leon County area. The Tallahassee Urban Area Transportation Study (TALUATS) was organized in 1965 as a joint undertaking between the City of Tallahassee, Leon County, and the State of Florida. The federal government participated through the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Consistent with guidelines developed by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, the Tallahassee Urban Area Transportation Study Policy Committee was reorganized into the Tallahassee-Leon County Metropolitan Planning Organization in early 1977, and was reconstituted on December 10, 1979, in conformance with Florida Statute 334.215. The Metropolitan Planning Organization was composed of the Leon County Board of County Commissioners, the Tallahassee City Commissioners, and a representative from the Leon County School Board.

In 2004, based on data from the 2000 Census, the Tallahassee-Leon County MPO was expanded to include the urbanized portions of Gadsden and Wakulla Counties and was renamed the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) to more accurately reflect its new regional focus. In 2008, the MPO planning boundaries were again expanded, and now the CRTPA planning boundary includes all of Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla Counties.

CRTPA Members & Meetings

Members

The CRTPA is comprised of elected representatives from Gadsden County, Leon County, Wakulla County, the City of Tallahassee, the Town of Havana, the City of Midway, and the City of Quincy, as well as a representative from the Leon County School Board. Additional representatives will be added from Jefferson County when interlocal agreements are finalized to formally add them as voting members of the CRTPA.

The CRTPA works with its planning and transportation agency partners in Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla Counties, as well as the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), various citizen and technical committees, organizational staff, and the public to:

- Identify and evaluate transportation needs in the region;
- Determine the types of studies, strategies, and improvements needed; and to
- Develop short- and long-term programs and plans that include schedules, improvement needs, and funding sources.

Regular Meetings

The CRTPA Board meets on a regular basis to provide direction and make decisions needed to implement transportation projects and strategies. The CRTPA typically meets on the **third Monday** of the month, six times a year. Meetings are scheduled to begin at **1:00 p.m.** in the City of Tallahassee or Leon County Commission Chambers, and typically last between one and two hours. The schedule and agendas for the CRTPA Board meetings are posted on the CRTPA website located at www.crtpa.org.

Special Meetings

The CRTPA can elect to call special meetings at any time deemed necessary to discuss specific issues of interest and importance to the region. These meetings are typically decided on with enough advance forethought that they can and will be advertised in the local newspapers with at least one week advanced notification when possible. These meetings will also be noticed on the CRTPA webpage at www.crtpa.org, and sent out in mass e-mail notifications to the contacts listed in the regional contact database maintained by the CRTPA for general and specific public involvement notifications.

Emergency Meetings

Infrequently, the CRTPA may need to call an emergency meeting to address issues that require immediate action, and which must take place so quickly that they can not be noticed in the newspaper in advance of the meeting. In instances where notification in the media is not possible due to an emergency meeting being called too late to meet media deadlines, notification will be placed on the CRTPA webpage at www.crtpa.org, and also sent out in mass e-mail notifications to the contacts listed in the regional database maintained by the CRTPA for general and specific public involvement notifications. Whenever possible, emergency meetings will be advertised in the local media with at least 24 hour notification of the meeting.

III.

CRTPA SUBCOMMITTEES

In addition to citizen input, the CRTPA Board receives input from four standing committees. These committees, with the exception of the Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC), are mandated and created by state law. The CRTPA Advisory Committees are as follows:

- ❖ **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC);**
- ❖ **Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC);**
- ❖ **Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC);** and the
- ❖ **Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB).**

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** is comprised of planners, engineers, and other technical personnel who advise the CRTPA and the other CRTPA committees on the technical feasibility and considerations of proposed projects. The TAC members are instrumental in assigning priorities to projects.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The **Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)** is comprised of citizen volunteers who provide input to proposed transportation plans from a citizen's perspective to the CRTPA. Through an integration of land use and transportation issues, the committee provides a meaningful discussion of the transportation planning process. Membership selections are from the general citizenry of the CRTPA area and are appointed by the Board Members. Citizens from Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla counties are eligible to serve on the committee. An application may be downloaded from the CRTPA website which is www.crtpa.org. The application can also be found in **Appendix B** of this document. Members elect their own Chair and Vice-Chairpersons from the current membership at the last meeting of each year, which is typically held in November or December.

There are typically 6 meetings a year for this subcommittee. Meetings are typically held on a Tuesday afternoon, approximately 2 weeks in advance of the CRTPA Board Meetings. Meetings have traditionally been held during the lunch period, from noon until 2:00 p.m. at varying locations in the City of Tallahassee. The most up to date meeting location and times are posted on the web page at www.crtpa.org under subcommittees, and can also be verified by calling our offices at 850-891-6800.

MULTIMODAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The **Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC)** is charged with reviewing projects to ensure that they are designed with transit, cycling, and pedestrian users in mind. The MAC provides comments on both recreational and non-recreational projects and seeks to provide connectivity between existing and planned projects. Membership selections are from the general citizenry of the CRTPA area, which includes Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla Counties. An application may be downloaded from the CRTPA website, which is www.crtpa.org. The application can also be found in **Appendix B** of this document. The CRTPA Board approves all membership appointments.

Members elect their own Chair and Vice-Chairpersons from the current membership at the last meeting of each year, which is typically held in November or December.

There are typically 6 meetings a year for this subcommittee. Meetings are typically held on a Tuesday afternoon, approximately 2 weeks in advance of the CRTPA Board Meetings. Meetings have traditionally been held during the early evening, between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. at varying locations in the City of Tallahassee. The most up to date meeting location and times are posted on the web page at www.crtpa.org under subcommittees, and can also be verified by calling our offices at 850-891-6800.

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED COORDINATING BOARD

The **Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB)** is the only CRTPA subcommittee that does not act in an advisory capacity to the CRTPA. The TDCB acts as advisors to the State of Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, a commission appointed by and under the auspices of the Executive Office of the Governor.

A CRTPA board member serves as the chairman for the TDCB and approves its citizen members. The role of the TDCB in addition to advising the state, is to discuss coordination issues among the agencies providing transportation for those who can not secure their own means of transportation. It also serves to resolve grievances between riders, carriers, and the Community Transportation Coordinator. Reports from the TDCB are provided to the full CRTPA at each CRTPA meeting.

TDCB members representing agencies are appointed by the agencies they represent. This comprises most of the membership. There are two citizen openings, one for a visually handicapped user of the system and one for an elderly user of the system. When one of these vacancies is open, the position is advertised in the local newspapers of the CRTPA region. Regardless of their membership in the CRTPA, each County, by Florida Statute, must maintain its own Coordinating Board. All meetings adhere to Florida Sunshine Laws and are duly advertised. The meeting schedule for the TDCB is located on the CRTPA website which is www.crtpa.org, and it can also be verified by calling a staff member at our offices at 850-891-6800.

IV. THE CRTPA MANDATED WORK PRODUCTS

Each year the CRTPA is required by federal law to produce certain planning documents. These planning documents include the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). In addition to these two documents, the CRTPA is required to develop a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) every five years. These three work products guide the expenditure of state and federal funds in a collaborative way, and are thereby important for citizens to fully understand so that they can engage themselves in the creation, adoption, and implementation of transportation planning in the region.

Each of the federally mandated work tasks is outlined below to provide basic information on the purpose, development, and extent to which the public can expect to be involved in the creation/adoption of each.

It is imperative that the CRTPA's public involvement processes provide complete information and appropriate public notification as well soliciting the involvement of the public in developing plans and programs that better enhance the public awareness of the transportation planning process. All of the CRTPA planning documents are available in alternative formats (i.e., Braille, compact disk, audio tape or other applicable sources for those people with limited English or physical abilities) upon request. Refer to Appendix A for information on how to contact CRTPA staff. Each of the documents is also available on the CRTPA web page located at www.crtpa.org, or you may contact the CRTPA staff to obtain copies by phone, fax, e-mail, mail, or stopping by. Complete information on how to contact CRTPA staff is listed below:

Mailing Address: Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency
300 South Adams, Box A-19
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Physical Address: Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency
408 North Adams Street, 4th Floor
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Telephone or FAX: Phone: (850) 891-6800
Fax: **(850) 891-6832**

In the development of each of these mandated work products, the public is provided with an opportunity to make comments and recommendations at various times during the adoption stages of these documents. Please refer to the following sections to learn how.

THE UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

What is it?

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) defines the tasks and anticipated funding requirements for the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) during the fiscal period beginning July 1, of any given year, and ending June 30, two year later. The document identifies the specific work tasks that each transportation partner will be working on in the upcoming two-year period within the CRTPA, and identifies the approximate dollar amount and funding source associated with the completion of each task. The UPWP essentially outlines the operating budget of the CRTPA staff for routine and special transportation projects.

When and how is it developed?

The UPWP is updated each year beginning in January and ending with final adoption typically in May of the same year. The update begins by reviewing the completed work tasks and status reports per project against the grant expenditures per quarterly billing cycle. Adjustments are made as necessary to ensure that adequate funds are available for the previously approved work tasks.

The document is organized by work task and lists each entity assisting with the funding or fulfillment of the task. Tasks identified are both routine such as agenda preparation and coordination with other outside agencies, and those that qualify as special or unique in that they do not appear in every year of the UPWP. Special Transportation Projects are typically dictated by the CRTPA Board (including select roadway corridor studies, safety studies, etc.) or by federal mandate.

What does it do?

The UPWP serves to inform the public, as well as all public officials and departments who contribute resources and allocate funds to the transportation planning process, of the proposed work program for each participating agency. In addition, the UPWP provides the basis for federal funding of transportation planning activities.

Importance to the Region

From a regional planning perspective, the UPWP is important in that it outlines the work that is to be undertaken by the CRTPA in the current two-year period.

WAYS FOR THE PUBLIC TO GET INVOLVED

The UPWP is updated each year between the months of January and April, with final adoption targeted for May of that same year. Typically, a DRAFT version of the UPWP is available for public review no later than February. During this time, the DRAFT UPWP can be reviewed on the CRTPA web page and is also available in alternative formats (i.e., Braille, compact disk, or other applicable sources for those people with limited English or physical abilities) upon request to the CRTPA. The contact information for the CRTPA and CRTPA website is provided in Appendix A.

During this DRAFT period, the CRTPA Board and its advisory committees, which include the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC) are also reviewing the UPWP. Citizens can attend any of the citizens advisory committee meetings or the CRTPA meetings to review and make public comment on the DRAFT or DRAFT-FINAL versions of the UPWP. The committee meeting times, locations, and agendas are listed on the CRTPA web page which is located at www.crtpa.org. You may also contact the CRTPA directly at 850-891-6801 to verify the upcoming meeting dates, times, and locations.

Additionally, if a citizen would like to serve on the advisory committees to the CRTPA Board, applications are available on-line on the CRTPA website www.crtpa.org and are also included in *Appendix B* of this document.

THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

What is it?

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a planning document that lists all transportation projects (local, state, federal) scheduled within the planning boundary of the CRTPA for any phase of funding within the upcoming five (5) years. Projects in the TIP typically appear first in adopted regional or local government project lists and plans such as the Capital Improvements Element Lists, Transit Development Plans, Airport Master Plans, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, and Long Range Transportation Plans. Projects in the TIP are grouped by type and jurisdictional responsibility and can include both long-range projects (constructing a new bridge or road) and short-term improvements (intersection improvements, etc.). Each listed project, for all modes of transportation, will include a project delineation/location, and will have the funding for the project identified by type, year, and project phase.

When and how is it developed?

The TIP is developed each year by updating existing information within the previous year's document and adding a new year of funding consistent with project information contained within the State Work Program. The TIP also includes locally funded projects contained within its member governments adopted capital budgets. Projects that receive state and federal funding are prioritized and voted on by the CRTPA before inclusion in the TIP each year. The proposed priority project lists are reviewed by the CRTPA's advisory committees, including the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC), and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) prior to CRTPA adoption in September of each year.

What does it do?

The adoption of a project into the TIP is essentially the mechanism that changes a project's status from "waiting for funding" to "having reserved funding." Reviewing the TIP allows the local citizenry to have an idea of the transportation changes that will be taking place in their community in the next five years.

Importance to the Region

From a regional planning perspective, the TIP is particularly important because it conveys the transportation priorities of the region from a funding perspective. These priorities are provided to the Florida Department of Transportation for their consideration in scheduling improvements on the State Highway System and for the use of federal funds on non-state facilities through the annual submittal of the CRTPA's priority project lists (contained within the TIP). The TIP, in essence, sets in motion the funding of projects in the communities long-range transportation plans and other capital improvement plans.

WAYS FOR THE PUBLIC TO GET INVOLVED

The CRTPA strives to ensure effective public communication and participation concerning development and adoption of the TIP, and all other planning documents. The TIP is unique in that the document is always changing and evolving...leaving the revolving door open for a continuous period of public involvement in the development of the CRTPA's TIP. Described below are the ways in which citizens can become involved during any given stage of the TIP development. Additionally, Section 6 of this document, "CRTPA Methods for Increasing Citizen Involvement", outlines various ways in which the CRTPA will solicit participation from the public. The CRTPA welcomes your input on methods you feel would be successful in capturing participation from you, your neighbors, friends, and co-workers.

Early Development:

TIP development actually begins in the development of *other* plans and documents, such as the Regional Mobility Plan (long range transportation plan), transit development plans, sector plans, local government planning and transportation studies and initiatives, etc. Getting involved in the local government planning process is the first step toward being involved in the development of the TIP. The TIP is essentially the "funded to do list" that seeks to carry out the transportation vision adopted in other local plans in the region. Through the review of agendas and attendance of meetings of the CRTPA as well as of the city and county commissions in Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla Counties you, a citizen, will be able to shape the plans that shape the TIP. The meeting schedule and agendas of the CRTPA are posted on the CRTPA web page located at www.crtpa.org. Additionally, if you are interested in projects inside the Tallahassee-Leon County area, there is a clearing-house website called, "Capital Legacy" that provides a link and information on most of the major planning initiatives in the area. The website address for Capital Legacy is www.capitallegacyproject.org.

Large scale projects, like the development of the long range transportation plan, sector planning studies, and roadway corridor plans are all special projects that will have public meetings, and committees of their own that you can attend/join. As these projects arise, they will be advertised on the CRTPA and other local government websites (listed in *Appendix A*).

Mid-Development:

Approximately one year prior to the annual adoption of the TIP, the CRTPA initiates a process to prioritize the region's projects that are eligible for state and federal funding. This process, the "Project Priority List (PPL) process", involves the CRTPA adoption of eight (8) PPLs including lists for major roadway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, and transportation enhancement projects.

Subsequent to adoption of the CRTPA's PPLs, the FDOT attempts to match available state and federal funding with the CRTPA's project priorities as it proceeds with development of the State Work Program. CRTPA region projects included within the

State Work Program are then added to the TIP. The PPL process allows citizens the opportunity to provide input into what projects they believe should receive funding priority. Between the months of June to September, the CRTPA's annual PPLs are developed. This process occurs at the CRTPA committee and board meetings. Additionally, in late summer/early fall, a public meeting is held to present the Draft PPL's to the public.

Citizens can attend any of the citizens advisory committee meetings or the CRTPA meetings to hear the discussions and to provide comment on any of the priority projects. The committee meeting times, locations, and agendas are on the CRTPA website located at www.crtpa.org, or you may call the CRTPA staff at 850-891-6800 to verify upcoming meeting information. Additionally, if a citizen would like to serve on the advisory committees, applications are available on-line on the CRTPA website and also included in *Appendix B* of this document.

Late Development:

The TIP is adopted by the CRTPA in June of each year. However, in an effort to provide the best communication and citizen participation possible in the development of the TIP, a public meeting is held prior to its adoption in May. This meeting is typically held in Tallahassee City Hall to in order to provide a central location that is accessible via transit use and for those citizens requiring accommodations for disabilities. The public meeting is advertised in the Tallahassee Democrat as well as other publications serving minority communities or traditionally underserved populations to ensure there is notification of the upcoming TIP. Draft copies are made available prior to the meetings and are available for public inspection throughout the entire process before, during and after the adoption of the plan. The TIP is also available on the CRTPA web page at www.crtpa.org. and is available in alternative formats (i.e., Braille, compact disk, audio tape or other applicable sources for those people with limited English or physical abilities) upon request.

Therefore, if a citizen missed an opportunity to get involved in the earlier stages of document preparation, they can still provide input prior to final adoption.

THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

What is it?

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a twenty-year strategy and capital improvement program developed to guide the effective investment of public funds in multi-modal transportation facilities. The intent and purpose of the LRTP is to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of a cost feasible intermodal transportation system that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight within and through urbanized areas of this state, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution. The plan may be amended as a result of changes in projected federal, state and local funding, major improvement studies, Congestion Management Process plans, interchange justification studies, and environmental impact studies. The Plan provides the context from which the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a short-range capital improvement program for implementing highway, transit, and bikeway projects, is drawn.

When and how is it developed?

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), known as the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) reviews and updates the LRTP every five (5) years. The schedule for the five year update of the LRTP is determined cooperatively by the MPO, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). During these updates, the CRTPA confirms the plan's validity and its consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends and extends the planning horizon to at least 20 years. These trends are then projected at least 20 years into the future to determine what transportation impacts and needs the region's growth and development is likely to have.

The development of the LRTP is typically completed using consultant services and takes approximately two (2) years to complete. The process begins with the establishment of existing conditions relating to transportation, land use, population, and employment. The population and employment figures are projected for the twenty-year horizon to provide a target for growth in the region. Based on these figures a transportation model is developed to assess the impacts to the transportation system based on increases in both resident and employment population. These impacts are then addressed by providing a transportation solution that may include transit, roadway and/or bike and pedestrian improvements. While the process typically remains the same for the model, the development of future transportation systems is evolving into a more expansive approach that addresses issues such as air quality, green house gasses, and mobility through the weaving of transportation modes. As the CRTPA moves into developing the Year 2035 LRTP, known as the Regional Mobility Plan, these efforts will further define how the CRTPA approaches transportation system improvements to moving people and not cars.

What does it do?

The LRTP helps guide all long-range transportation improvements in the region. These are typically capital-intensive projects that require years of planning via the Transportation Improvement Program and the Priority Project List process. Projects such as minor intersection improvements or minor neighborhood sidewalk improvements are not typically included in the LRTP as opposed to major sidewalk improvements along arterial roads such as Apalachee Parkway or Capital Circle. The LRTP establishes the transportation plan to guide future growth in the region, but it is also responsive in that it can be amended over time to reflect changes in community values and react to unforeseen changes in the economic prosperity of the region.

Importance to the Region

The LRTP is the most important document the CRTPA produces for improving the transportation system in the region. All transportation projects that the CRTPA pursues for funding through the state and federal governments must be included in the LRTP. It is this document that lays out the plan for the future transportation infrastructure of the region. The Plan provides the community with a blueprint and plan for where and what type of transportation expenditures need to be made so that land use decisions can responsibly follow and produce the desired community of tomorrow.

WAYS FOR THE PUBLIC TO GET INVOLVED

The CRTPA seeks to maximize public communication and participation during the development and adoption process of the LRTP. In keeping with this desire, the CRTPA ensures that there are a number of different ways all throughout the development process of the LRTP in which citizens can become engaged in the project development.

In keeping with the implementation of a proactive public involvement program, the public involvement coordinator commissions an aggressive advertising campaign – in local newspapers as well as publications serving minority communities and traditionally underserved populations to ensure there is notification of the upcoming meetings and presentations. Additionally, in some areas of the region, notifications and materials are provided in an alternate language to serve the concentration of non-English speaking citizens there. Community workshops are also used to ensure that the community and underserved populations understand the purpose and function of the LRTP. Furthermore, notifications of upcoming meetings and presentations can be found on the CRTPA web page at www.crtpa.org.

Section 6 of this document, “CRTPA Methods for Increasing Citizen Involvement”, outlines various ways in which the CRTPA will solicit participation from the public. The CRTPA welcomes your input on methods you feel would be successful in capturing participation from you, your neighbors, friends, and co-workers.

As mentioned previously, all CRTPA mandated work products are available in alternative formats (i.e., Braille, audio tape or other applicable sources for those people with limited English or physical abilities) upon request.

Early Development

The scope of services and consultant contract calls for the development of a separate Public Participation Program that specifically addresses how the consultant will interact with the public as well as outlining, in general, the meetings and events that will be held to both educate and solicit ideas from the public during the development of the LRTP. This proactive approach is tailored to the project schedule to ensure that an open and thorough public involvement process is achieved via a collection of over twenty meetings and presentations during the critical junctures in the plan development process. The purpose of these meetings is to explain the issues, describe the potential solutions and the impacts associated with each and to receive input from the public. Additionally, there are brochures, websites, and speakers that are available to discuss the project with individuals or groups.

Citizen participation is also available during the development of the LRTP PIP through the review by the CRTPA subcommittees, including the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC), and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Citizens are encouraged to attend these subcommittee meetings and are afforded an opportunity to provide formal public comment there if they wish. The Subcommittee meeting dates and agendas are posted on the CRTPA website www.crtpa.org. Additionally, if you wish to become a member of one of these subcommittees, applications are provided in **Appendix B** of this document, as well as being available on-line at the CRTPA website.

All of the LRTP meetings and workshops will be held with extensive advance public notification via various methods (such as newspaper ads, flyers, brochures at civic events, webpage advertising, etc.) and will be posted prominently on the CRTPA's website www.crtpa.org. At least half of these meetings and presentation will be held in minority communities or near traditionally underserved populations to ensure that there is an inclusive public involvement process.

Mid-Development

There are typically three to four “rounds” of meetings held during the two-year development of the LRTP with regular agenda items on the CRTPA Board agenda. The CRTPA meeting dates and agendas are posted on the CRTPA website www.crtpa.org.

Mid-way through the development of the LRTP, public meetings are held to gather public opinion on “scenario planning”. During “scenario planning”, the public can provide input on the type of transportation network they would like to have (balanced, or more emphasis on transit, or bicycle and pedestrian, etc.). A Needs Plan is developed that identifies a suggested collection of regional transportation projects that could provide for the anticipated transportation demand of the region in the future. The Needs Plan is

followed by the development of a Financial Document and a proposed “Cost Feasible Plan” which together outline funding sources that could be available to fund the Needs of the region, as well as the proposed projects that the region would like to see funded with the money. Citizens are given an opportunity at each phase of plan development (Scenario, Needs, and Cost Feasible Plan preparation) to directly indicate where they would like the government to spend the limited transportation funding in their region. A method that has been used in the past has involved handing out “play money” to citizens, and have them place the money on different projects or scenarios in the region to indicate the values of the community, and also to teach the citizenry the true cost of the projects and forms of transportation. Often times, the results can be eye opening for both citizens and CRTPA staff members.

As in the early development of the LRTP, citizen participation is available through the review by the CRTPA subcommittees, including the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC), and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and by citizens attending these meetings and speaking. Additionally, workshops and public meetings will be held to address the DRAFT Needs Plan and Cost Feasible Plan development before the CRTPA Board takes formal action.

Late Development

A public hearing is held after the Cost Feasible portion of the Long Range Plan has been developed, but before it has been adopted by the CRTPA, in which feasible long-term, transportation improvements are identified. Draft copies are made available prior to the meetings and are available for public inspection throughout the entire plan development process.

The adoption and amendment process for the LRTP calls for a public comment period of 30 days for citizen review and input prior to adoption. Towards the end of the comment period, the CRTPA will hold advertised public meetings and hearings to review and obtain final comments from the public. Additionally, comments can be made on the CRTPA’s website at www.crtpa.org. The LRTP is then reviewed by the CRTPA committees for their final comments and are then recommended to the CRTPA for adoption at the next scheduled meeting.

After the adoption of the LRTP, the public can still comment on the document at the CRTPA Board Meetings and as necessary during the development of the TIP. The LRTP is a dynamic document that can be addressed at any meeting. The Meeting schedule for the CRTPA and it’s subcommittees can be found on the CRTPA website at www.crtpa.org. You may also contact CRTPA staff directly at 850-891-6800 to gather this information.

V. FEDERAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GUIDELINES

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) require a proactive public involvement process as an integral part of the transportation planning and project development process used by Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The public involvement process must provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement.

In addition, *Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* provides that “each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority and low-income populations.”

ISTEA/TEA-21/SAFETEA-LU

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) include the following requirements for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) regarding public involvement:

- Provide timely information about transportation issues and procedures to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs, and projects
- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and Transportation Improvement Programs and open public meetings where matters related to the federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered; and
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including, but not limited to, low-income, and minority households.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations includes the following two fundamental principles of environmental justice:

- To ensure that public involvement includes low-income and minority groups in decision-making; and
- To prevent disproportionately high and adverse impacts of decisions on low income and minority groups.

In general, this means that for any program or activity for which any federal funds will be used, the agency receiving the federal funds (including states, cities and MPOs) must:

- Make a meaningful effort to involve low-income and minority populations in the processes established to make the decision about the use of the federal funds; and
- Evaluate the nature, extent, and incidence of adverse human health or environmental impacts of the program or activity upon minority or the underserved population areas in the County.

The CRTPA is committed to the development of equitable policies that avoid disproportionately negative effects on minority and/or low-income populations. The CRTPA works continuously to ensure the full participation of all affected communities in the transportation planning process. This plan identifies goals and objectives for engaging those traditionally underserved by the transportation planning process. These goals and objectives can be found in **Appendix C** of this document.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

What is Limited English Proficiency

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is a term used to describe individuals who are not proficient in the English language. Within the CRTPA region, there are small pockets of individuals who, according to Census data, are identifiable as being LEP, largely within Gadsden County. It is important that CRTPA staff closely monitor the presence of LEP individuals and be innovative and proactive in engaging them in the transportation planning process.

Executive Order (EO) 13166 -*Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency* prohibits recipients of Federal financial assistance from discriminating against persons based on national origin by failing to provide meaningful access to information and services to individuals who are LEP. This protection against

discrimination requires that LEP persons be provided an equal opportunity to benefit from or have access to services that are normally provided in English.

CRTPA believes that the best transportation decisions are inclusive and address the needs of the entire community. Moreover, CRTPA finds that a diversity of cultures and backgrounds make for unique community that is reflected in its transportation systems. However, CRTPA recognizes that the inability to speak English proficiently may create a barrier to participation in or access to the organization's programs, services and activities. CRTPA is committed to providing meaningful access to everyone, regardless of limited English proficiency (LEP). As such, it will follow the following action plan for providing oral interpretation and written translation:

Oral Interpretation

CRTPA will utilize bilingual staff to provide LEP services in Spanish, the second most prevalent language in the community. Further, CRTPA will reach out to its faith-based, community, and government partners to ensure proficient interpretation is always available. The organization maintains a list of its LEP service partners and regularly updates the list to add new resources and languages. If CRTPA is unable to provide meaningful access using these sources, it will utilize professional translation services.

CRTPA is constantly vigilant for new opportunities and ways of reaching LEP populations, including using foreign language publications in the area, and foreign language ads in English speaking or print media. The organization requests assistance in enhancing and expanding its LEP services. Anyone wishing to volunteer language services or suggest methods of LEP outreach should contact the CRTPA at 850-891-6800.

Written Translation

CRTPA follows US Department of Justice and US Department of Transportation guidelines in providing translation of its documents into languages other than English. Using data collected from the Census, environmental screening tools, its advisory committees and the Panhandle Area Consortium, the CRTPA will assess each of its documents in light of:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the organization's service area.
2. The frequency with which the organization encounters LEP individuals.
3. The nature and importance of the program, service or activity in question.
4. The resources available to the organization.

To ensure appropriate and competent translation, CRTPA will utilize professional translation services or the language departments of its university partners.

CRTPA recognizes that the community's current demographics may not require extensive translation of its written documents. However, because the community is always changing, the organization is committed to constantly reassessing LEP needs. Furthermore, CRTPA does not intend that the four factor analysis should prevent meaningful access to its documents. Anyone in need of assistance or accommodation in reviewing organization documents may contact the CRTPA at 850-891-6800.

VI. CRTPA METHODS FOR INCREASING CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

While it is clear that the current level of public involvement in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process has been vital to the successes of the CRTPA, it is the intention of this document to stimulate an even greater level of citizen participation. This can be accomplished by examining some of the more difficult areas in the transportation planning process. One such area is the channel of communication between elected officials, technical personnel, and the citizenry of the CRTPA area. The ability of the public to have access to, and to understand the written material is an important aspect of the public involvement process. The CRTPA will continue to implement an ongoing program that provides adequate information for the public to make informed decisions on transportation issues through various channels. Public comments and suggestions for improving this process are welcomed, and will be evaluated and incorporated as appropriate into this section in future updates of this document.

Determining Methods of Involvement

The CRTPA has identified many different ways on the following pages to share information, provide education and outreach, and to meet with the public to promote public involvement in the transportation planning process. While lengthy, this list is not exhaustive, and it is also not specific to which projects they will be used for and when -- this is intentional. Different public involvement efforts will be prescribed for different CRTPA transportation projects based on factors such as project location in the region, locations of public involvement events planned for the project, location and type of audience targeted, and past experience with both the public involvement for the project and public involvement with the target audiences. Section IV of this PIPP does, however, provide general guidance to citizens on how and when they can expect to be involved in public involvement activities for the major work tasks of the CRTPA. Specifics relating to the actual dates, locations, and methods used to gather input will be determined as projects unfold and in reaction to regional data on best public involvement practices for the intended CRTPA audiences.

Types of Involvement/Education/Outreach Efforts

➤ *Publication of CRTPA Meeting Agendas*

Currently CRTPA staff produces the CRTPA meeting agendas to be placed on the Internet or sent out (via email and US Postal Service) to the public, various agencies, and regional stakeholders a minimum of one week prior to the CRTPA meeting. Besides the CRTPA meetings, staff regularly advertises the TAC, CAC and MAC meetings. As of June 2003 staff has been sending out all agenda packets in Adobe PDF format. This type of format is accessible to most individuals who have access to a computer; the Adobe software can be downloaded from various sources on the

Internet at no cost. And so, this is a very effective tool for outreach purposes, even for those who do not have computer, as they can access the Internet at no cost at a local library, read the agenda, and download and print its attachments. But again, the CRTPA offers offline as well as alternative formats of its agenda upon request, depending on the needs of the community.

➤ ***CRTPA Semiannual Newsletter***

CRTPA staff will produce and distribute a twice-yearly newsletter concerning transportation issues throughout the CRTPA's jurisdiction, which will be distributed to citizens, municipalities, interested individuals, organizations, the media, other agencies, and interested parties. These newsletters will typically be distributed in the July/August and December/January time periods and will give the public an idea of current CRTPA efforts and events, and outline other transportation related projects that are going on in the area. It will have items such as transportation projects for capital region metropolitan area, in addition to schedules of CRTPA sub-committees and other CRTPA related activities. The mailing list will be based on the region's profile database, as well as maps that include those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems. The newsletter will be used to promote regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications, and work products. Feedback from the public and contact information will be included in each issue. Citizens may ask to be placed on the Newsletter e-mail list via the webpage at www.crtpa.org. Just choose, "Contact Us" and let us know that you would like to be added to our informational e-mail blasts!

➤ ***Workshops/Transportation Fairs***

A workshop or transportation fair can help to alleviate some of the miscommunication that may exist regarding the transportation planning process by educating citizens about its inner workings. The CRTPA will sponsor several public involvement workshops prior to decision-making points in the metropolitan planning process. These workshops will be informal meetings where the public can learn about the metropolitan planning process and upcoming projects. The object will be to provide a relaxed atmosphere in which individuals will feel more comfortable than at an official public hearing and thus able to participate more openly. The transportation fairs will offer a more family-oriented atmosphere in which to discuss transportation issues. This type of event would involve a variety of exhibits: maps, photos, models, slide shows, videos, and give-away items. At both the workshop and the fair, CRTPA staff, other transportation professionals, and elected officials would be on hand to answer citizens' questions. While workshops should be designed to bring the public up to date on the details of a plan or project under development, a transportation fair should be held twice a year in coordination with other transportation agencies.

In the past, the CRTPA has participated in Bike to Work Week Workshops and Fairs (advertised around Tallahassee and on the web pages of the CRTPA and Commuter Services of North Florida), Leon County Health Fairs, and Transportation Fairs sponsored by the State of Florida Office Complexes. Additionally, CRTPA staff makes an effort to secure informational booths at regional festivals such as

Springtime Tallahassee, and the Winter Festival in Tallahassee if staff time allows. If you have an idea for a transportation fair or workshop to be held at your place of employment or in your neighborhood center, CRTPA staff would love to know about it and work with you!

➤ ***Alternative Media***

These tools offer additional ways (other than television, newspaper & radio) for the CRTPA to disseminate information. One such tool includes Internet web sites. Currently the CRTPA has a website which includes information such as meetings, applications, and reports. The web address is www.crtpa.org. The availability of the site will allow staff to more effectively distribute surveys concerning the effectiveness of the public involvement process. The webpage is also a helpful location for CRTPA staff to provide reports and informational items to the public.

➤ ***Plan/Reports***

These documents are published by the CRTPA at regular intervals and include the UPWP, PIP, LRTP, TIP and other plans and reports. Throughout the development and at various times during the adoption stages of these documents the public is provided with an opportunity to make comments and recommendations. Also, CRTPA material will be placed in various locations such as libraries, grocery stores, or community centers. All CRTPA mandated work products are available in alternative formats (i.e., Braille, audio tape or other applicable sources for those people with limited English or physical abilities) and are available on the webpage at www.crtpa.org.

➤ ***Informational Pamphlets***

CRTPA staff will produce and distribute informational pamphlets regarding current transportation planning projects in the CRTPA area and explain the purpose of the CRTPA. These pamphlets will be available to the public at various public locations and will be distributed to the public by various means, such as workshops, CRTPA meetings and other events held by CRTPA staff. Most recently informational handouts are available on the status of the Regional Mobility Plan and the Regional Transit Study, both of which are currently underway.

➤ ***Newspaper, Television and Radio***

Another potentially effective method of reaching out to the public sector is through the use of multi-media technology. The CRTPA will make information available through news releases to area newspapers, television and radio stations. Also, the CRTPA will periodically include newspaper supplements explaining the LRTP and TIP in the *Tallahassee Democrat* and the *Capitol Outlook*. The CRTPA will use every opportunity to utilize public-access television for the purpose of educating the public on transportation issues throughout the Leon County area.

➤ ***Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency Web Site***

The CRTPA web site (www.crtpa.org) is a user-friendly tool intended to provide the public with access to transportation information that will increase awareness of transportation planning activities in the area. This site includes information about the metropolitan transportation planning process, upcoming meeting agendas and other topics pertaining to the transportation planning process. Over the years the Internet has become a frequently used tool for sending and retrieving information; however, the CRTPA recognizes that traditional forms of public outreach will continue to be important for achieving meaningful participation. These traditional methods will be continually used by the CRTPA, but staff will continue its efforts to find the most efficient and effective ways to distribute information to citizens. Publications such as the TIP, the LRTP, the UPWP, the Bicycle – Pedestrian Master Plan, as well as this document, will be accessible directly from the site.

➤ ***Targeting Educational Institutions***

In the context of planning for long-range transportation improvements, provisions should be made to include young people in the process. This can be most effectively accomplished through the school and university system. A series of presentations will be developed and maintained that will target various levels of the local student population, from elementary school through the university level. At the elementary school level, the program will emphasize transportation issues such as pedestrian and bicycle safety and the history of transportation planning. At the university level, the program will be geared towards raising public awareness through the implementation of courses – possibly sponsored or directed by the CRTPA – that deal specifically with transportation planning or urban and regional planning. In its efforts to continually reach out to all segments of the community, CRTPA staff plans on visiting various schools throughout the school year to talk about the transportation planning process.

➤ ***Outreach Services***

One aspect of public involvement that is sometimes overlooked is the need to include all segments of a community in the transportation planning process.

This means that participation should be sought from the disabled, the elderly, the young, ethnic minorities, and any other segment of the community that might have unique transportation needs. To better reach out to underserved populations, the CRTPA will make contact with these groups and determine what their needs are through the development of outreach services. Outreach services involve developing contacts, mailing lists, and other means of communication with a broader cross-section of the community. One way of developing communication with a representative collection of citizens is by holding "town-hall" meetings. Another is to target specific groups, such as homeowners associations or the local chapter of the American Association for Retired Persons, and then set up informational meetings geared towards that group's particular needs and concerns.

With regard to outreach, the CRTPA wishes to accomplish the following:

- ✓ Maximize opportunities during one-on-one or small group dialogue to engage citizens further in the planning process;
- ✓ Create opportunities for staff to build relationships with the public and to provide education on transportation issues, both within and outside of project development;
- ✓ Provide opportunities other than public meetings for people to have input into project decision making; and
- ✓ Look for ways to coordinate and communicate with other agencies on public involvement or outreach activities.

➤ ***Technical Memos***

For long-term projects (i.e. the long range plan or roadway projects), CRTPA staff and /or project consultants will prepare technical memoranda concerning the technical and policy information used in each of the project's steps. These documents provide background information regarding how a project/plan was developed and the next step to be taken in the process. Additionally, summary reports will be available that describe the project background and project phases in easy-to-understand language. Although very in-depth, technical memos can often be overwhelming and difficult to understand if the reader does not have a high base-level understanding of the project to begin with.

➤ ***Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)***

One of the most essential functions of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, according to both the federal and state law, is ensuring that a proactive public involvement approach is used in the transportation planning process. Within the CRTPA subcommittee structure, the Citizens Advisory Committee is a required CRTPA advisory committee. The CAC serves as the citizens' voice in the CRTPA and is looked upon to provide a channel of communication into the transportation decision making process for traditionally underserved populations, including, but not limited to, low-income and minority households. Citizens may submit applications to serve on the CAC at any time in the year. Applications can be found at the CRTPA website and are available at all CRTPA functions. An application is also provided in ***Appendix B*** of this document. CAC meetings are open to the public, therefore, if a citizen is interested in learning about the projects being discussed in the region, they can simply attend the meetings and provide comments there as well.

There are typically 6 meetings a year for this subcommittee. Meetings are typically held on a Tuesday afternoon, approximately 2 weeks in advance of the CRTPA Board Meetings. Meetings have traditionally been held during the lunch period, from noon until 2:00 p.m. at varying locations in the City of Tallahassee. The most up to

date meeting location and times are posted on the web page at www.crtpa.org under subcommittees, and can also be verified by calling our offices at 850-891-6800.

CRTPA Staff Internal Efforts To Increase Public Involvement

The manner in which CRTPA staff is organized can help increase public confidence in the public involvement efforts of the CRTPA, and thereby increase overall public participation. Steps can be taken to ensure that CRTPA staff is well equipped to provide excellent assistance, knowledge, and guidance to the public in all public involvement events and outreach activities. Outlined below are two ways in which CRTPA staff will prepare organizationally to build citizen confidence in the public involvement process of the CRTPA.

Training and Information Exchange

CRTPA staff will continue to take part in professional training opportunities and interdepartmental/interagency discussions relating to the program documents and work products that the CRTPA produces on a regular basis. Taking part in such opportunities gives the CRTPA the benefit of sharing and learning from the experiences of other MPO's and organizations which best practices are effective in engaging the public in varying demographic and urban/rural planning regions.

Building Continuity of Project Knowledge and Citizen Confidence

CRTPA staff will continue to cross-train its staff such that no one staff member is the sole proprietor of project or program document information. Such cross training helps to ensure that project information, public concerns, and public involvement history of each project or program document is carried forward from phase to phase, and year to year, such that disruption in employee work schedules does not result in compromised project knowledge when dealing with the public. The goal is to heighten the continuity of project knowledge, thereby heightening the public's confidence in CRTPA staff.

To attain this goal, the CRTPA will institute regular internal staff debriefing meetings to update other CRTPA staff members of ongoing work products and project status. Additionally, each program document or project will have one primary contact person and a secondary contact. At least two staff members will attend all public meetings and outreach efforts on CRTPA program documents and projects. If more than one meeting is being held on the same topic during the same time of day in different locations, then the primary and secondary project managers will attend different meetings to provide the highest level of project knowledge and continuity at concurrent meetings.

VII. EVALUATION OF CRTPA PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT EFFORTS

Federal regulations require the CRTPA to review the Public Involvement Process Plan (PIPP) periodically to determine if the goals and objectives of the process (outlined in *Appendix C*) have been achieved and if adjustments are necessary to make it more effective. There is great value in conducting such reviews, and as such, the CRTPA has designed a review system that enables the CRTPA to identify quickly when new strategies and techniques are warranted to try to better reach the public and improve the overall performance of the public involvement process.

Evaluating Public Involvement Efforts via Goals and Objectives

In determining the effectiveness of the PIPP, CRTPA staff will assess the successes of each public involvement event immediately following the event. Immediate evaluation of the effort allows immediate refinement to the process and ultimately results in the successful, meaningful public involvement of future events. Activities that prove ineffective can be immediately discontinued and replaced with new strategies to make efficient use of the time and money allocated to the overall public involvement process.

During the evaluation of public involvement efforts, staff will determine to what degree the following 4 public involvement goals have been met:

- (1) The provision of equitable opportunities for participation in transportation decision-making to all interested persons in the CRTPA region;
- (2) Informing and educating the public early, clearly, and continuously throughout the transportation decision-making process;
- (3) Identifying and utilizing a variety of methods to most effectively inform and engage the public; and
- (4) Carefully considering public input in transportation decision-making.

Evaluating Public Involvement Efforts via Performance Indicators

Appendix C of this document outlines the Goals and Objectives of this PIPP in Guide format. This Guide provides the framework for the CRTPA to develop effective public involvement practices and efforts as well as to evaluate the successes and shortfalls of the efforts. Included under each objective is a list of Performance Indicators, which constitute “targets” to be reached in varying public involvement activities. An evaluation of how well these measures were met during varying public involvement activities assists the CRTPA in the evaluation and ongoing refinement of its education, outreach, and involvement activities. These evaluations will be conducted following each and every public involvement activity – making the public involvement plan dynamic in that it can continually change to address the needs of the region as the region itself changes.

VIII. PROVIDING PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment is an important part of the public involvement process and provides informative feedback to the CRTPA on plans and programs. As such, the CRTPA encourages the public to provide written and verbal comments on any transportation issue being considered by the CRTPA. These comments can be provided at any of the CRTPA workshops, public hearings, or events regarding the transportation issues. A portion of the agenda at all regularly scheduled CRTPA meetings is reserved for public comment, and public comment forms are available at all CRTPA sponsored events. Additionally, the public is invited to provide comments directly to the CRTPA office or through the CRTPA web page located at: www.crtpa.org.

CRTPA staff understands that providing public comment can sometimes be intimidating – especially if you have not done so before. Therefore, CRTPA staff has provided some tips (below) that can help citizens get their comments across most effectively. Additionally, before all public meetings, CRTPA staff, or their designee, will identify a person that citizens can approach for assistance with providing written or verbal public comment, should they want extra help.

Tips on Providing Written Comments

- 1) Type or write legibly, type or print your name under your signature.
- 2) Include your complete address.
- 3) Be brief and to the point.
- 4) Be courteous, but firm.
- 5) Keep a copy for your records.
- 6) Send written comments to:

*Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency
300 South Adams Street, Box A-19
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
Fax: (850) 891-6832*

Tips on Providing Verbal Comments

You may call any member of the CRTPA staff at (850) 891-6800, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

- 1) Have your information ready before calling.
- 2) Have a pencil and paper ready for taking notes.
- 3) Identify yourself, speak slowly and clearly.
- 4) Present your views in a clear, concise, and polite manner.
- 5) Ask for the name of the person taking the call for future reference.

Tips on Providing Comment In Person

Public Involvement Workshops/Meetings

Workshops are used to bring citizens up to date on the details of plans or programs under development and are usually held prior to crucial decision-making points in the metropolitan planning process. Citizens are encouraged to provide meaningful comments regarding the plan or program being presented and are also provided with details regarding the next steps to be taken prior to the next workshop or public hearing. Local newspapers and the CRTPA website (www.crtpa.org) will announce future public workshops or it is possible to contact the CRTPA office for information on upcoming events.

Public Hearings

These meetings are mandated by law, and are held by the CRTPA to consider the adoption of the plan or program. Watch the local newspaper for public hearing announcements, or visit the CRTPA website at www.crtpa.org to view information about upcoming public hearings.

APPENDIX A

CRTPA CONTACT INFORMATION AND GLOSSARY

CRTPA CONTACT INFORMATION

To learn more on how you can become involved in the CRTPA planning process, please contact a CRTPA staff member via any method outlined below:

Mailing Address: Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency
300 South Adams, Box A-19
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Telephone or FAX: Phone: (850) 891-6800
Fax: (850) 891-6832

By Internet Website: **Website:** www.crtpa.org

DEFINITIONS / ACRONYMS

Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) - Responsible for coordinating transportation services for disadvantaged individuals. For Tallahassee and Leon County, StarMetro is currently the CTC.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) - Representatives of the community who provide and gauge public reaction to planning proposals and provide recommendations to the CRTPA regarding transportation needs of the community

Environmental Justice – refers to efforts to avoid disproportionate negative impacts on minority or low-income populations from any federally funded program or activity.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) - An administration within the USDOT responsible for federal guidance and funding of aviation issues.

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) - The state agency granted the legislative authority to develop and maintain state transportation facilities and services.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) - An administration within the USDOT responsible for federal guidance and funding for federal and state highway facilities.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) - An administration within the USDOT responsible for federal guidance and funding for public transportation facilities.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) - The federal transportation appropriation bill established to develop a national intermodal transportation system that is economically efficient and environmentally sound, encourages citizen participation, provides the foundation for the nation to compete in a global economy, and moves people and goods in an energy efficient manner.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or "LEP." These individuals may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type or service, benefit, or encounter.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) - A federally mandated 20 - 25 year transportation plan, which provides guidance in the development of an efficient, multimodal transportation system.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - An agency created under federal and state law to provide a forum for cooperative decision-making with regard to regional transportation issues. Membership includes elected and appointed officials representing local jurisdictions and transportation agencies.

Multi-modal Transportation System - A comprehensive transportation system which includes travel options for cars, transit, truck, airplane, motorcycle, bicyclists & pedestrians.

Multimodal Advisory Committee - is charged with reviewing projects to ensure that they are designed with transit, cycling, and pedestrian users in mind. The MAC provides comments on both recreational and non-recreational projects and seeks to provide connectivity between existing and planned projects. Membership selections are from the general citizenry of the CRTPA area, which includes Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon and Wakulla Counties. An application may be down loaded from the CRTPA website which is www.crtpa.org. The application can also be found in Appendix B of this document.

Project Development & Environmental Study (PD&E) - A study performed to determine the feasibility of a road improvement by identifying possible alternatives and evaluating the social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with them.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – A regional representation of local and state planners, engineers, and transit operators who provide technical input regarding transportation plans and programs and makes recommendations to the CRTPA.

Title VI - Refers to a segment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, requiring that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program/ activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

Transportation Disadvantaged - Refers to those persons who because of physical or mental disability, income, age, or who for other reasons are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation. They may be dependent upon others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities or may be children who are handicapped or high-risk

Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB) - TDCB is responsible for identifying the needs of those who cannot secure their own means of transportation, bringing those needs to the attention of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), and monitoring the amount of Transportation Disadvantaged Funds being received locally.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Incorporates, and coordinates the transportation capital budgets of the FDOT, Leon County, and City of Tallahassee, delineating project activity, location, estimated costs, and proposed funding sources.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) - A federally mandated report that documents the planning and resource activities of the MPO.

United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) - The federal department responsible for guidance and funding for all federally supported transportation activities.

APPENDIX B

CRTPA SUBCOMMITTEE APPLICATIONS

Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPLICATION

<p>Please return in person to:</p> <p>Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency 408 N. Adams St., 4th Floor Tallahassee, Florida 32301</p> <p>Or mail to:</p> <p>CRTPA 300 S. Adams St, Box A-19 Tallahassee, Fl. 32301</p>	<p>Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency</p> <p>• 408 N. Adams St., 4th FLOOR • TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301</p>	<p>This application will remain in active files for two years.</p> <p>Please contact the CRTPA to advise of any changes regarding the information on this application.</p> <p>Email: lynn.barr@talgov.com FAX: 850-891-6832 PHONE: 850-891-6800</p>
Name:		Date:
Work Phone:	Home Phone:	Email:
Occupation:		
Employer:		
<i>Please check box and provide your preferred mailing address.</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Work Address: City/State/Zip:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Home Address: City/State/Zip:		
<p>The Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency strives to ensure that its citizens advisory committee is representative of the community's demographic makeup. To assist in this endeavor, please provide the following information (voluntary).</p> <p><i>Please also note if you are physically challenged.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>		
Race: <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> White		Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
Identify any potential conflicts of interest that might occur were you to be appointed:		
Do you ride the bus? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you drive a car? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Do you bicycle to work/shopping? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you bicycle for recreation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you walk to work/shopping? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you walk for recreation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>Please circle your age bracket</p> 18 – 25 / 26 - 35 / 36 - 49 / 50 and over		
Can you serve a multi-year term? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Can you regularly attend meetings? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Conflicts:	
Education:		
High School or other higher learning institutions attended	Dates	(Degree received, if applicable)

CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD/COMMITTEE APPLICATION

Please provide biographical information about yourself (attach a resume, if available). Identify previous experience on other boards/committees; charitable/community activities; and skills or services you could contribute to this board/committee. This information will help us create an advisory board that is reflective of a broad spectrum of the community:

References (at least one):

Name:

Phone:

Address:

Name:

Phone:

Address:

All statements and information provided in this application are true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

If you have a disability requiring accommodations, or need assistance filling out this application, please contact the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency at 850-891-6800.

The telephone number for the Florida Relay TDD Service is 711 or 1-800-955-8771.

Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) MULTIMODAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPLICATION

<p>Please return in person to:</p> <p>Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency 408 N. Adams St., 4th Floor Tallahassee, Florida 32301</p> <p>Or mail to:</p> <p>CRTPA 300 S. Adams St, Box A-19 Tallahassee, Fl. 32301</p>	<p>Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency</p> <p>• 408 N. Adams St., 4th FLOOR • TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301</p>	<p>This application will remain in active files for two years.</p> <p>Please contact the CRTPA to advise of any changes regarding the information on this application.</p> <p>Email: lynn.barr@talgov.com FAX: 850-891-6832 PHONE: 850-891-6800</p>
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Name:	Date:
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Work Phone:	Home Phone:	Email:
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Occupation:

Employer:

Please check box and provide your preferred mailing address.

Work Address:

City/State/Zip:

Home Address:

City/State/Zip:

The Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency strives to ensure that its citizens advisory committee is representative of the community's demographic makeup. To assist in this endeavor, please provide the following information (voluntary).

Please also note if you are physically challenged. Yes No

Race:	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> White		<input type="checkbox"/> Male

Identify any potential conflicts of interest that might occur were you to be appointed:

Do you ride the bus? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you drive a car? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Please circle your age bracket 18 – 25 / 26 - 35 / 36 - 49 / 50 and over	Do you bicycle to work/shopping? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you bicycle for recreation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you walk to work/shopping? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Do you walk for recreation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
--	--

Can you serve a multi-year term? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Can you regularly attend meetings? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Conflicts:
---	---

Education:

High School or other higher learning institutions attended	Dates	(Degree received, if applicable)

MULTIMODAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPLICATION

Please provide biographical information about yourself (attach a resume, if available). Identify previous experience on other boards/committees; charitable/community activities; and skills or services you could contribute to this board/committee. This information will help us create an advisory board that is reflective of a broad spectrum of the community:

References (at least one):

Name:

Phone:

Address:

Name:

Phone:

Address:

All statements and information provided in this application are true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

If you have a disability requiring accommodations, or need assistance filling out this application, please contact the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency at 850-891-6800.

The telephone number for the Florida Relay TDD Service is 711 or 1-800-955-8771.

APPENDIX C

CRTPA PIPP EVALUATION GUIDE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

CRTPA PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

OVERVIEW

The CRTPA seeks and values public involvement in the development of its work products from EVERYONE in the CRTPA region. In keeping with this, public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. The CRTPA holds all meetings in facilities that are compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in CRTPA programs, services, and activities. This includes qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments. Persons who require special accommodations under ADA, or persons who require translation services (free of charge) are asked to contact the CRTPA at least seven days before the meeting. Additionally, CRTPA staff provides the translation of documents into other languages, upon request, for persons with limited English proficiency. To request any special accommodations such as those listed above, interested persons can contact the CRTPA at (850) 891-6800, or visit the CRTPA web page at www.crtpa.org to request such accommodations.

MISSION

The mission of the CRTPA public involvement plan is to ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to fully participate in the transportation decision-making process and that the input from the public is carefully considered and reflected in the work of the CRTPA.

To achieve the mission of the public involvement plan, four key goals must be satisfied. These four goals are supported by accompanying objectives and performance indicators. While the goals identify specific outcomes that the public involvement program is designed to produce, the supporting objectives outline a detailed plan of how to get there. The performance indicators listed below each set of goals and objectives are intended to be used as targets to reach in varying public involvement activities. While most of these targets evaluate how effective the public involvement efforts are at reaching the goals and objectives of the plan, an evaluation of how well these targets are met in each public involvement effort provides an indication of how effectively the public involvement plan is being implemented.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The goals, objectives, and performance indicators of the public involvement plan are provided on the following pages. This compilation of goals, objectives, and performance indicators constitutes a guidebook of what the CRTPA wishes to accomplish with regard to specific public involvement characteristics. Additionally, each goal and objective is followed by a description of what the objective is trying to accomplish, a set of performance indicators that identify accomplishment targets, and a brief outline of what data sources can be used to measure to accomplish the objectives and measure overall success. This guidebook will be utilized in the development of and ongoing education, outreach, and involvement activities of the CRTPA. Following each public involvement event, CRTPA staff will conduct an assessment of the successes and shortfalls of the event in accordance with the applicable goals, objectives, and performance indicators outlined herein. Adjustments will be made throughout the year to successive public involvement efforts in an effort to heighten public involvement effectiveness.

GOAL 1: EQUITY

PROVIDE AN EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN TRANSPORTATION DECISION-MAKING.

Description: This Goal addresses the desire to ensure that all interested persons, including those with disabilities, within the underserved populations (minority, low-income, and elderly), with limited English proficiency, who reside or work in the periphery of the CRTPA boundary, and those who rely on transit services, walking, or cycling as their means of transportation, have as equitable an opportunity as others in the CRTPA boundary to participate in transportation decision-making for the region.

For this goal to be met, the CRTPA must ensure the following seven (7) target actions are met:

- **All persons, including those with disabilities, must have access to notification, information and participation opportunities;**
- **Information must be provided in languages other than English and in formats suited for persons with disabilities if requested;**
- **The meetings and events must be convenient to public transportation, when available;**
- **The meetings or events must be held at convenient times and locations, taking into consideration work-home commute times in the outlying CRTPA areas;**
- **The public involvement opportunities are geographically dispersed;**
- **The public involvement efforts must be designed as accessible to the underserved populations; and**
- **Public Involvement events/committees/meetings must be targeted to attract and reflect the demographic make-up of the region.**

EQUITY
OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

The objectives and performance indicators designed to support the Goal of, “Equity” in the public involvement plan are described below.

OBJECTIVE E.1: The Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency will identify traditionally underserved populations within the region, including minority, low income and elderly populations, and plan public involvement and outreach efforts for these segments of the population with their unique needs in mind to promote their participation.

Description: This objective aims to promote involvement by populations that are traditionally underrepresented in the transportation decision-making process by identifying the location of these populations and tailoring outreach and involvement efforts to capture their participation. Because these populations are unique and vary by location and limitations, each CRTPA work project will be presented to these populations in ways that appear most appropriate and effective given the most up to date data available for the area.

Performance Indicators:

- A.** Public involvement efforts are held in areas identified as within or convenient to concentrations of the underserved populations, including the elderly, handicapped, minority, low-income, and limited language populations.
- B.** Public involvement information and meeting notifications are distributed in common public areas such as libraries, grocery stores, or community centers within or serving the underserved population areas. This is in addition to notices in the local newspapers.
- C.** In addition to the traditional use of mail to reach the underserved populations, staff will actively solicit input from these populations by conducting one-on-one interviews with their community leaders to gain information and solicit their participation or recommendations for community representation.
- D.** Diversity of participation is being achieved.
- E.** Participation by the underserved populations in the region is being witnessed.

Data and Measurement: The Census Block Group data will be used as a foundation to identify the traditionally underserved population areas. At a minimum, the CRTPA will

identify minority, low-income, elderly, handicapped, and language limited population concentrations in the region. Outreach activities will be tailored to involve individuals from these populations in the transportation planning process.

When assessing participation by the underserved populations, zip codes data can be requested on citizen sign-in sheets to help track if the citizen may be coming from an area of the region representative of an underserved population concentration. Census Block Group data can be used to determine if the zip code overlaps an underserved population area. This method of determining participation is very speculative, but due to privacy concerns, this may be the best indicator of reaching representatives of these areas.

OBJECTIVE E.2: The CRTPA will maintain a regional database identifying key representatives of professional organizations and underserved segments of the region's population and solicit their participation in CRTPA transportation-related work products. The database should include, but is not limited to a list of the community leaders from the various churches, neighborhoods, civic organizations, and service organizations for disabled or elderly and other organizations that are located within the traditionally underserved areas within the region.

Description: This objective aims to promote citizen involvement, including populations that are traditionally underrepresented in the transportation decision-making process, by identifying representatives of underserved populations and community leaders throughout the region to assist in the CRTPA outreach and involvement efforts. This database of contact information will be utilized in mail-outs and as a starting point for mass notifications of upcoming workshops, and meetings.

Performance Indicators:

- A. On a yearly basis, CRTPA staff updates the regional contact database and it's subcommittees to add new community leaders or groups within the region to the notification and public involvement solicitation contact list.
- B. At least as frequently as every update to the long range transportation plan, the regional profile for the CRTPA area will be updated to identify the locations of the underserved populations and changes to that demographic.
- C. The regional profile database, maps and CRTPA mailing list will be used for distribution of agendas; public notices and any other CRTPA related activities that are part of the public participation program.

Data and Measurement: The Census Block Group map will be used as a foundation to identify the traditionally underserved population areas. Outreach activities will be tailored to involve individuals and representatives from these communities in the transportation planning process. In addition to the traditional use of mail to reach the underserved populations, staff will actively solicit input from these areas by conducting one-on-one interviews with community leaders to gain information and solicit their participation or recommendations for community representation.

OBJECTIVE E.3: Provide diversity and seek representation on the CRTPA citizen-based subcommittees (Multimodal Advisory Committee, and the Citizens Advisory Committee) that reflects the demographics of the region when possible as well as the interests of the underserved populations.

Description: This objective stresses the importance in achieving representation and consistent participation by a set of individuals that are representative of the broader public, and particularly the underserved populations.

Performance Indicators:

- A. The membership of the CRTPA subcommittees represents the demographics of the CRTPA region and maintains the integrity of its purpose.
- B. The CRTPA Subcommittee membership and attendance records are reviewed annually, to monitor how closely the demographic composition of the CRTPA advisory committees mirrors that of the demographics on record with the CRTPA region database, and if the interest of the minority, handicapped, elderly, and low-income populations are being represented on the committees.
- C. CRTPA staff seeks interested parties who can adequately represent the interests of the underserved to serve in an advisory capacity when vacancies exist and when that segment of the population is underrepresented on the committee

Data and Measurement: At least as often as every update to the long range transportation plan, census data will be updated for the region that will provide the framework for the desired demographics of the citizens advisory committee membership. As membership applications are reviewed for consideration in filling vacancies to the committee, the demographics or representation characteristics, which are lacking will be taken into consideration when seeking an appropriate committee member candidate. There may be times; however, when the applicant pool does not contain the type of representative the CRTPA is seeking, and when outreach efforts to find the desired representative are not successful. In these instances, the applications currently on file will be forwarded to the appropriate appointing CRTPA member for their consideration in filling the vacancy.

OBJECTIVE E.4: Geographically disperse public hearings and workshops throughout the CRTPA region to equalize the accessibility to information and participation across the region.

Description: This objective tracks whether access to public involvement opportunities is being distributed across the planning area equally.

Performance Indicators:

- A. At least one meeting or opportunity is located in each county of the CRTPA region for work tasks that are of interest to the entire region.

- B. Meeting locations are alternated along the study corridor for projects that are specific to a sub-area within the CRTPA region, and not of special concern to the entire region.

Data and Measurement: This could be tracked through a record keeping of meeting or event locations in relation to projects or actions. It would vary according to the type and nature of the work project...special transportation projects may only involve specific area of the region (such as specific corridor studies) whereas other projects, such as the long-range transportation plan, may involve the entire region. For roadway improvement projects, the objective would be to spread successive meeting locations along the corridor, where as with widespread work tasks, the objective would be to spread meeting locations throughout the region.

OBJECTIVE E.5: Meeting sites will be selected which are convenient and more easily accessible to traditionally underserved populations.

Description: This objective pertains to the suitability of event locations to most effectively serve the region's public and underserved populations. Whenever possible, the general public should be able to use public transportation to attend public involvement events. Limitations include the service area of the transit or paratransit provider. The locations must be accessible to persons with disabilities, with emphasis placed on identifying locations that offer sidewalks, adequate lighting, and which are a short walking distance (less than a quarter of a mile) from available transit.

Performance Indicators:

- A. The majority of participants feel the event is held at a convenient location.
- B. Public involvement efforts are held in areas identified as within or convenient to concentrations of the underserved populations, including the elderly, handicapped, minority, low-income, and limited language populations.
- C. Public involvement opportunities are held in locations that are accessible to persons with disabilities
- D. Public involvement locations are served by transit or are accessible by means other than the automobile when these amenities are present in the desired location for public involvement events.
- E. Public involvement events are within paratransit service areas, or are held concurrent with events/meetings that have a large attendance by the elderly or disabled, such as Local Coordinating Board meetings.

Data and Measurement: Satisfaction with meeting/event location would be measured largely by responses to surveys administered at the meeting or distributed via the web or by mail. Surveys need to be administered to a large sample of the invitee list (including those who did not attend) to ensure that a representative opinion of meeting location is discerned from the survey. Responses to the surveys will be utilized to determine if changes need to be made in the location of future events. Assessments of citizen attendance at events will be made immediately following the events/meetings to assess if changes need to be made to future meetings to capture better participation.

Regarding accessibility to transit services, the meeting locations can be planned within a quarter mile of transit services, unless no transit service is available within the affected area. Records should be kept of suitability of different locations used, as well as surveys conveying the satisfaction from the attendees with regard to the amenities of the location. In addition, locating meetings in areas that have the availability of ADA complementary paratransit service or other coordinated transportation (dependent on available non-sponsored funding) will help ensure that the elderly or disabled population can attend.

OBJECTIVE E.6: The CRTPA meetings/events will be held at times designed to be convenient to capture the highest level of public involvement.

Description: This objective aims to ensure that those individuals participating or those invited but not participating feel that the public involvement opportunities are offered at a convenient time. Different areas of the region may require different meeting times to be convenient for the population within that area. For example, evening meetings may be perceived as less convenient in areas with a high proportion of retirees or night-workers, but may be preferred in areas with a high percentage of daytime workers. Those with long commute times to and from work may need even later meeting times than those living and working within close proximity of each other. When possible, meetings should be held at staggered times to increase overall opportunities for participation.

Performance Indicators:

- A. The majority of participants felt the meeting or event was held at a convenient time.
- B. The majority of invited persons surveyed who did not attend, expressed reasons other than inconvenient time for not attending the event/meeting.
- C. Meetings/Events are held at different times during the day, or over the course of several days/weeks/months to capture more participants.

Data and Measurement: Satisfaction with meeting/event time would be measured largely by responses to surveys administered at the meeting or distributed via the web or by mail. Surveys need to be administered to a large sample of the invitee list (including those who did not attend) to ensure that a representative opinion of meeting time is discerned from the survey. Responses to the surveys can be utilized to determine if changes need to be made in the scheduling times in different areas of the region. Assessments of citizen attendance at meetings and events will be made immediately following the events/meetings to assess if changes need to be made to future meetings to capture better participation.

OBJECTIVE E-7: CRTPA information is available in alternate formats for the handicapped, and in languages other than English when the need is made known.

Description: This objective addresses the need to be able to provide alternate methods of information to the public when requested, or when the need is foreseeable. This includes providing information in Braille, large print, audio reproduction, and in languages other than English when requested or when the need is apparent. This is particularly important in areas with large immigrant populations who speak English as a second language, and in pockets of the elderly and handicapped populations.

Performance Indicators:

- A. Information is provided in languages other than English where the affected population comprises a high proportion of non-English speakers.
- B. Information is provided in alternate formats for the elderly and handicapped/vision impaired citizens of the region.
- C. The majority of disabled persons that requested accommodations were satisfied with efforts made to accommodate their needs

Data and Measurement: This indicator requires a determination of whether an affected area contains a high proportion of non-English speakers that will likely require information in another language or potentially need translation services, and if specific areas of the region have other alternate format needs as well. Pockets of elderly may require the foresight to provide materials in large print, for example. Census Block Group data will be used to identify areas of the region where the need to provide information in non-typical formats is greater. After a need has been identified, then CRTPA staff will track if written materials and media announcements related to transportation projects and actions in these areas were translated into languages other than English, or provided in other alternate formats. Records will be kept of requests made and accommodated for alternate formats of information.

GOAL 2: INFORMATION AND EDUCATION
***INFORM AND EDUCATE THE PUBLIC EARLY, CLEARLY, AND
CONTINUOUSLY THROUGHOUT THE TRANSPORTATION DECISION-
MAKING PROCESS.***

Description: Effective public involvement requires the open-two-way sharing of information. To participate effectively, people must be kept informed early and continuously throughout the decision-making process. Public information materials must also be clear and understandable to the target audience. This means that public involvement informational materials will need to be shared in different ways with different population groups to be effective. The public must also have a clear understanding of who the CRTPA is, what the organization does, and have complete confidence in the staff.

The following group of objectives and performance indicators aims to ensure that the public is adequately notified about on-going and potential transportation projects and that those interested in participating in the decision-making process are kept informed and have confidence in the public involvement process. The following targets must be met to satisfy the Information and Education Goal of the public involvement plan:

- **Information is conveyed to the public regarding the role the CRTPA plays in transportation decision-making in the region;**
- **Project information/education is conveyed clearly and made available to all interested persons in the planning region; and**
- **Adequate public noticing of involvement opportunities is provided.**

INFORMATION
OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

OBJECTIVE I.1: Provide clear and complete information to the public about the CRTPA, the transportation decision-making process, work tasks of the CRTPA, and public involvement opportunities.

Description: This objective aims to ensure that CRTPA information is provided to the public in an easy-to-understand manner, and that it is comprehensive enough in scope to give them the ability to participate meaningfully in the transportation decision-making process.

Performance Indicators:

- A.** The CRTPA has provided a comprehensive, up to date, easy to navigate web page to share information with the public. CRTPA contact information, agendas, materials, and schedules are easy to find on the web site. Additionally, all CRTPA related meeting dates, advertisements of public hearings, meetings, or workshops related to transportation planning are included on the web site. All draft and adopted CRTPA documents are easy to download off the site. The web site address is included in all printed materials.
- B.** Informational sheets/pamphlets/brochures/newsletters are created to explain CRTPA work tasks, and efforts are made to distribute them to the citizens in the CRTPA region, including those within the underserved populations. Newsletters are sent out to those on the regional profile database contact list as well as made available at libraries, grocery stores, meetings, the Internet and other various locations through the community.
- C.** The majority of persons surveyed, who have received CRTPA information agree that the information provided is clear and that they know where to seek additional information.
- D.** The majority of persons surveyed, who have received CRTPA information agree that the information provided is explained adequately such that they understand the work task/public involvement opportunity, and how to get involved further.
- E.** Advertisement/public notice material is given with adequate advance notification and is easy to understand.

Data and Measurement: The primary data source would be responses to questionnaires that are distributed to participants at meetings, via the web page or by mail. Information on the public reaction to the amount of notification, clarity and completeness of information provided on informational materials and CRTPA presentations would be sought. Responses to the surveys would be used to determine if improvements need to be made in various forms of agency communications with the public, and if so, to which populations within the CRTPA region.

OBJECTIVE I. 2: Seek opportunities to educate the public about the different ways they can influence the transportation improvements for the future, and how they can get involved to shape the future of transportation in the region.

Description: This objective speaks to the need for the CRTPA to engage itself with the public to raise the visibility of the CRTPA and its function, and also to raise the awareness and understanding of the public of the transportation decision-making process. This multi-faceted objective aims to increase the confidence level of the public in the CRTPA staff such that public involvement efforts become more proactive and cooperative than reactive and suspicious in nature.

Performance Indicators:

- A. The CRTPA participates in many different outreach avenues to educate and solicit participation from the public on various work tasks of the CRTPA.
- B. CRTPA staff takes steps to maintain the continued involvement of citizens in the transportation decision-making process once they have been engaged in the process.
- C. Assistance is provided, such as training, coordination, or the provision of resources, to community and special interest groups, especially those dedicated to transportation issues to increase public awareness of the CRTPA and to provide outreach and assistance.

Data and Measurement: The primary data source would be a record of the outreach and coordination efforts that the CRTPA took part in. Additionally, data on the number of citizen encounters and new repeat participants in public involvement activities would be a good indicator of the successes in introducing new participants to the transportation decision-making process.

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GOAL 3: METHODS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ARE EFFECTIVE
IDENTIFY AND UTILIZE A VARIETY OF METHODS TO MOST EFFECTIVELY INFORM AND ENGAGE THE PUBLIC.

An effective public involvement process involves the citizenry early and often in the decision-making process so their knowledge and concerns can be considered in project development. Although public meetings are a versatile involvement technique, they should be used in combination with a number of other activities to widen the appeal of participating to others within the region. It is crucial to understand the audience and to tailor the methods of public involvement to their specific and unique needs. In particular, efforts to engage the traditionally underserved populations (elderly, disabled, low-income, language limited, to name a few) often require more personal levels of engagement such as neighborhood meetings and one-on-one introductions to be highly effective.

The following group of objectives and performance indicators are intended to produce effective public involvement throughout the CRTPA region. The following targets must be met to satisfy the Methods of Effective Public Engagement Goal:

- **Participants must be involved using multiple techniques;**
- **Interested persons must feel they had an adequate opportunity to participate; and**
- **Interested persons must see value in their participation opportunities.**

METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT
OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

OBJECTIVE M.1: Use a variety of methods to engage the public and solicit their comments on the plans and projects of the CRTPA in a meaningful way.

Description: This objective requires the use of multiple methods of public involvement to increase the rate of public participation in the CRTPA area. Using a variety of methods recognizes that people respond to different types of public involvement with varying levels of comfort and willingness to participate. Therefore, providing a variety of different types of participation opportunities increases the likelihood that a broader range of the public will become engaged in a meaningful way. Methods to be considered among the possibilities include public meetings, charettes, neighborhood meetings, professional organization presentations, one-on-one meetings, webpage comment forms, and surveys to name a few.

Performance Indicators:

- A. Public Involvement Invitees are involved using multiple techniques.
- B. Public Involvement participants feel that the methods of involvement are meaningful.
- C. CRTPA staff will utilize email to solicit comments on transportation planning materials and the meaningfulness the participants placed on their involvement in the decision-making process.

Data and Measurement: The number of involvement techniques used per project per area of the CRTPA region can be easily tracked in a record log, and the number of participants reached using multiple techniques can be cross-checked by reviewing sign-in sheets of multiple meetings. To determine the perceived “meaningfulness” of the methods of involvement, surveys will need to be conducted on the invitees. This can be done through the use of mail-out questionnaires, on-line surveys, e-mail, surveys handed out and collected at the meetings themselves, and through one-on-one interviews.

OBJECTIVE M.2: Provide adequate advance notification and an adequate opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

Description: This objective aims to ensure that the public involvement activities provide adequate notification (such that individuals can plan to attend participation opportunities) and opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. It also conveys that the CRTPA wants those who participate in the decision-making process to feel that the methods used by the CRTPA to engage them were valuable tools and worth repeating.

Performance Indicators:

- A. The majority of interested persons feel that they have an adequate opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

- B. The majority of interested persons feel that they have adequate advance notification to be able to participate in the decision-making process.

Data and Measurement: The primary data source is responses to questions in surveys administered at meetings, via the web, or by mail on the value of the public participation strategies employed for that specific project. The responses will provide an indication of which public involvement methods are perceived by the public as being most valuable. This information can then be further broken down into which populations of the CRTPA respond better to different methods of involvement. This second tier of evaluation would require the gathering of zip-code information at public involvement opportunities, and then the cross referencing of zip codes to Census Block Group data to have a clear picture of what methods work best for different segments of the region.

OBJECTIVE M.3: Maintain interest and enthusiasm in the transportation planning process by ensuring that proper techniques for public involvement are used to convey and collect relevant information within the region. Closely monitor the involvement levels from the traditionally underserved population groups, to evaluate which techniques for public involvement are most effective.

Description: This objective speaks to the need to maintain the interest of participants in continued public participation with the CRTPA. This continued participation raises the knowledge base of those in the public involvement activities and strengthens the relationship between the citizenry and CRTPA staff. Increased knowledge and continuity of involvement leads to heightened confidence level in the public participation process and overall citizen voice in the transportation decision-making process. Additionally, it stresses the importance of monitoring the results of public involvement efforts to further their effectiveness.

Performance Indicators:

- A. Citizens attending public involvement opportunities for a specific project are also being involved in additional CRTPA public involvement activities for other projects.
- B. Citizens who are from or who represent the underserved populations within the CRTPA region are actively involved in multiple public involvement opportunities for multiple projects.
- C. CRTPA staff evaluates public involvement efforts for effectiveness at capturing target populations, and modifies participation strategies in response to the needs of target areas and the region as a whole to promote increased participation.

Data and Measurement: The primary data source is attendance records of public involvement activities in the CRTPA region. Zip-code information will be requested at public involvement opportunities to gain insight into the areas of the CRTPA that the involvement activities are reaching and appealing to. This information can provide guidance on the probability of participation by persons belonging to an underserved population. Additionally, the names of those attendees at all CRTPA public involvement activities can be cross-referenced to determine the level of cross involvement from both the general citizenry and the underserved populations. Involvement efforts will be evaluated to determine how best to increase target population participation, based on past involvement per method used.

GOAL 4: RESPONSIVENESS

***CAREFULLY CONSIDER PUBLIC INPUT IN TRANSPORTATION
DECISION-MAKING.***

Effective public involvement means more than just notifying people about the process and providing them with the opportunity to comment, it means effectively engaging the citizenry with CRTPA staff. Effective public involvement requires that the citizenry has the opportunity to participate, to be heard, and to engage in dialogue with decision-makers that is carefully considered, and met with a response.

The following objectives and performance indicators set the foundation for a public involvement process that is designed to involve and be responsive to citizen input throughout the CRTPA region. The following targets must be met to satisfy the Responsiveness Goal in the public involvement plan.

- **Interested persons must feel they had an adequate opportunity to share their ideas and concerns; and**
- **Interested persons must feel public input was considered in the decision-making process.**

RESPONSIVENESS
OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

OBJECTIVE R.1: Provide opportunities for the public to have input on any action being proposed by the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency.

Description: This objective speaks to the public's need to have easy and open access to CRTPA staff for the purpose of conveying comments, questions, concerns and ideas on CRTPA projects to CRTPA staff. Interested persons need to have numerous opportunities and avenues available to them to include their ideas in the decision-making process.

Performance Indicators:

- A. Comment cards are available at CRTPA related functions.
- B. Contact information for CRTPA staff is provided on all distributed materials, including physical location, mailing address, phone and fax numbers, and web page address.
- C. Comment opportunities are provided on the CRTPA web page for both broad topics and individual projects.
- D. Each CRTPA subcommittee and CRTPA Board meeting agenda includes dedicated time to hear and address citizen comments and concerns.
- E. A summary of public comments is provided to the CRTPA as they are received. All items adopted by the CRTPA include a summary of the public comment as part of the documentation.

Data and Measurement: Responses and comments received are often a reflection of the degree of participant satisfaction with the overall comment process. Comments received will be catalogued and evaluated not only for the issue raised for a particular project, but also for any information the comment may provide on effectiveness of the comment process. Issues such as ease of submission, and responsiveness, or acknowledgement of comments received, are important pieces of information that can be used to further refine the public involvement process to gain higher customer satisfaction with the overall process. Typically, comment and concerns will be received in written form through web page comment sections, surveys distributed at CRTPA functions, and through e-mail correspondence with the public. However, sometimes these comments and concerns are conveyed via telephone or in face-to-face conversation. All forms of public comment encountered will be documented and evaluated for usefulness in both project development and refinements to the public involvement program.

OBJECTIVE R.2: Citizens involved in the process have confidence that their input is considered in the decision-making process.

Description: This objective helps frame the public involvement opportunities in such a way that they are designed to do more than seek comment on work that has already been completed. The involvement opportunities must be true opportunities where decisions have not been pre-determined and the information shared with the CRTPA has an opportunity to be considered and utilized in the decision-making process. The objective addresses the fact that participants need to see that they are “heard” by CRTPA staff and that their input is considered.

Performance Indicators:

- A. The majority of participants feel that their input is considered.
- B. Public comments, reactions and perceptions are conveyed to the CRTPA subcommittees and CRTPA Board. Where appropriate, comments are shared with local, state and federal officials
- C. Public comments are incorporated into plans and solutions where appropriate.

Data and Measurement: Responses to CRTPA surveys and comment cards will provide an indication on the confidence level the majority of participants have that their input is adequately considered and addressed. Additionally, project documentation will show the degree to which citizen comments and concerns were addressed and incorporated into project development.

OBJECTIVE R.3: CRTPA staff is responsive to citizen requests, comments, and concerns.

Description: To achieve confidence in the public involvement process, citizens need to know that their comments and concerns are not only heard, but also taken seriously. For public involvement to be meaningful, the ideas and concerns of participants need to be carefully considered in the decision-making process. CRTPA staff needs to provide a high level of responsiveness to citizen input so that their confidence in CRTPA staff is gained and maintained throughout the process.

Performance Indicators:

- A. The majority of participants feel that CRTPA staff is responsive and encourages citizen involvement and input.
- B. Public comments, reactions and perceptions are conveyed to the CRTPA subcommittees and CRTPA Board. Where appropriate, comments are shared with local, state and federal officials
- C. Responses to public inquiries are made within 2 working days of the date of inquiry receipt.

Data and Measurement: This objective can be monitored largely by noting the time and date of public requests for information and the time and date of CRTPA responses. E-mail to the CRTPA readily includes this information, whereas telephone calls and other forms of contact will need to be documented. CRTPA staff strives to provide same-day contact to give the citizen assurance that the request has been acknowledged, with an adequate response provided within 2 working days of the inquiry. Citizen surveys can also provide information on if the public perceives the response time from CRTPA staff to be adequate and reasonable. Negative responses will be evaluated further for determination on how to improve customer satisfaction and regain citizen confidence.

OBJECTIVE R.4: CRTPA staff is responsive to the successes and failures of the on-going public participation activities such that adjustments are made along the process to heighten the effectiveness of each successive activity.

Description: This objective speaks to the need to continually evaluate the successes and failures of the various methods employed to solicit public participation in the CRTPA region. The CRTPA must be in tune to the needs of the region's population and adjust involvement strategies to mirror those needs if effective public participation is to be achieved.

Performance Indicators:

- A. Public involvement efforts are evaluated at the conclusion of each activity to document the audience reached, and successes and shortfalls of each method used.
- B. The successes and shortfalls of each public involvement effort are compared against the efforts previously completed to determine relative increases or decreases in involvement effectiveness.
- C. At the end of each year (December) a report that describes the effectiveness of the public involvement strategies used throughout the year is prepared. This report should include a summary of all public comment to be shared with the CRTPA, as well as local, state, and federal government representatives.

Data and Measurement: The CRTPA will keep a public involvement book that keeps track of all of the public involvement activities of the year, with an evaluation report attached outlining what aspects, if any, of the manner in which the public was involved should be altered for the next public participation opportunity.