

Chapter 1

Introduction

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Introduction

Transportation affects everyone, and represents a critical component of an area's social and man-made infrastructure. The CRTPA 2040 Regional Mobility Plan (*Connections 2040 RMP*) defines the region's strategy to accommodate existing and future travel needs. The RMP aims to provide residents and visitors with access to a multimodal transportation system that promotes economic vitality and quality of life throughout the region. This is accomplished through the identification of a regional vision and the development of a financially constrained plan. The RMP supports the identified vision through a set of projects and programs that can be implemented within the 25-year planning horizon. The RMP addresses all modes of travel, including automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, aviation, and freight-related movements.

“The Connections 2040 RMP aims to provide residents and visitors with access to a multimodal transportation system that promotes economic vitality and quality of life throughout the region.”

Background

The scope for the *Connections 2040 RMP* includes establishing goals for the region, characterizing current and future transportation needs, engaging stakeholders and the community, documenting multimodal transportation strategies, and developing a Cost Feasible Plan.

Reason for the Plan

The Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) is the region's metropolitan planning organization (MPO). The CRTPA is responsible for coordinating transportation planning within Florida's Capital Region: Gadsden County, Jefferson County, Leon County, and Wakulla County.

The planning process for *Connections 2040 RMP* was guided by the two advisory committees that serve the CRTPA Board, the Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee (CMAC) as well as the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The two committees consist of representatives from all counties that represent a broad cross-section of residents and technical staff in the CRTPA planning area. The CRTPA facilitates a regional, cooperative planning process that serves as the basis for spending the region's state and federal transportation funds for improvements to roads, bridges, public transit, freight routes, and bicycle and pedestrian networks.

The Regional Mobility Plan (RMP) characterizes current and future transportation needs and highlights the multimodal recommendations to address these needs. The plan must be reviewed and updated every five years. In addition, the plan must be fiscally constrained, meaning that CRTPA cannot plan to spend more money than the MPO can reasonably expect to receive for project implementation through the year 2040. A further consideration is that the eligibility of projects to receive federal funding is dependent on their inclusion in the RMP.

Federal Transportation Requirements (MAP-21)

The *Connections 2040 RMP* is governed by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), which was signed into law on July 6, 2012. MAP-21 allocated a total of \$105 billion for surface transportation programs in its first two fiscal years (FY 2013 and FY 2014). The goals of MAP-21 include strengthening America's highways, establishing a performance-based program, creating jobs and supporting economic growth, supporting the United States Department of Transportation's aggressive safety agenda, streamlining Federal Highway Administration transportation programs, and accelerating project delivery and promoting innovation. This legislation has currently been extended through October 2015.

These goals are manifested within the MPO's long-range transportation planning program through nine broad planning factors identified for special focus. The planning factors are explained in greater detail in the following pages.

- Connectivity
- Economic Development
- Access
- Multimodalism
- Land Use
- Security
- Safety
- Public Health
- Natural Resource Protection/Conservation

The CRTPA Area

CRTPA is responsible for transportation policy development, planning, and programming for the Capital Region which includes Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, and Wakulla Counties. The planning area itself covers locations in which growth is likely to occur during the timespan of the long-range transportation plan. MPOs are required to evaluate their boundary after each U.S. decennial census to ensure the planning area is inclusive of all future urbanized areas.

Four County Region of CRTPA



Gadsden County

As of the 2010 census, the population was 46,389. Its county seat is Quincy. The population in Gadsden County has a higher than state average minority population with just over two-thirds of the population reporting a minority racial identity. The county has a total area of 529 square miles. Gadsden County is predominantly an agricultural area accounting for nearly 65% of its total area.

Jefferson County

As of the 2010 census, the population was 14,761. Its county seat and largest city is Monticello. The county has a low population density given the predominance of agricultural uses (averages 24 persons per square mile). The county has a total area of 637 square miles with 80% actively used for agriculture and 15% in some form of conservation.

Leon County

Leon County is home to the state capital of Florida, Tallahassee. As such, the county has the largest population (276,506) when compared to the rest of the four-county region. Employment and employment density follow closely with this pattern; employment density in Leon County is almost 8 times greater than Gadsden County. The economy is anchored by state and local government, health care, and higher education. The City of Tallahassee is home to Florida State University and Florida A & M University.

Wakulla County

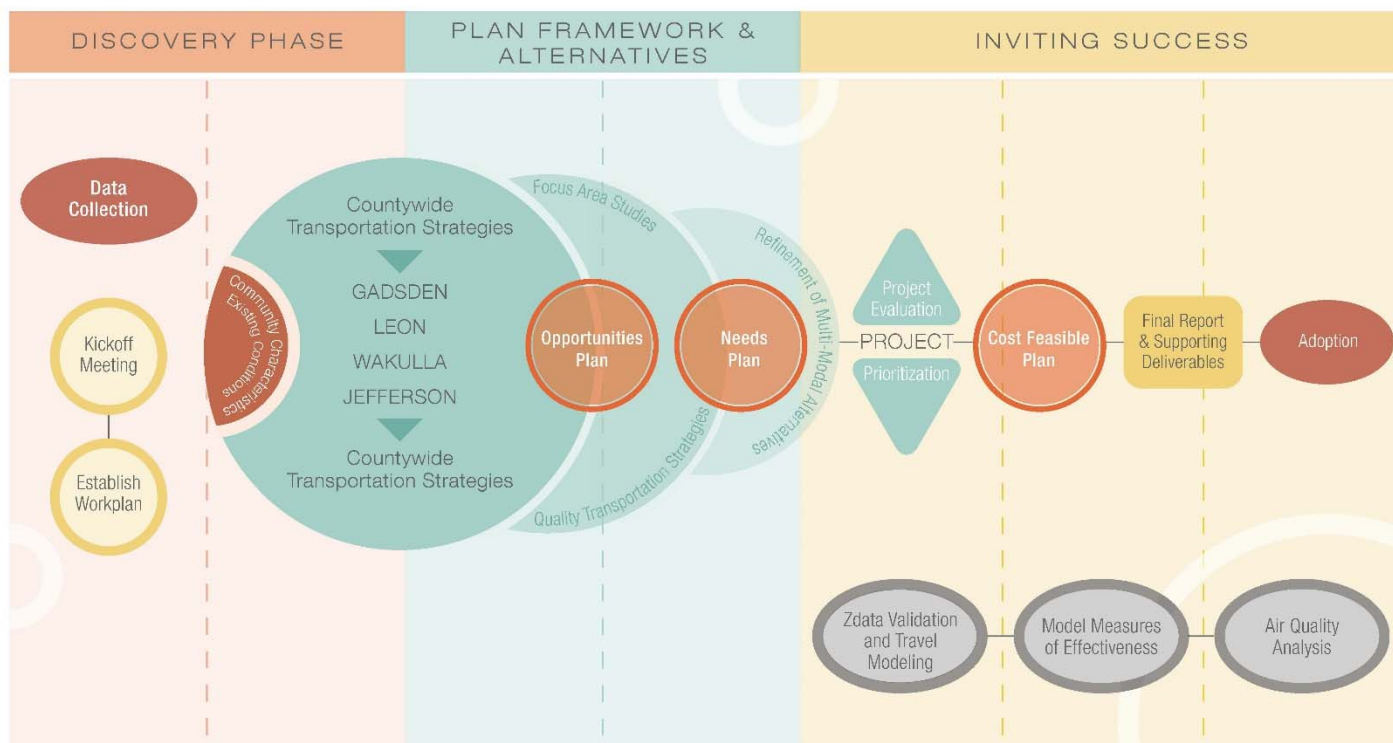
As of the 2010 census, the population was 30,776. Its county seat is Crawfordville. Approximately 60% of Wakulla County is made up of conservation land associated with the Apalachicola National Forest and the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Another 23% of land is classified as agricultural land. The county seat, Crawfordville, is the only unincorporated county seat among Florida's 67 counties.

Planning Process

The *Connections 2040 RMP* represents a collaborative effort to establish a transportation vision for the Capital region. The plan leverages a combination of technical analysis, public engagement, and committee involvement. The *Connections 2040 RMP* took a grass-roots approach, acknowledging that each of the counties that make up the CRTPA have different characteristics and priorities. Therefore, the plan embraced a process that allowed for a grass-roots approach without compromising the regional strategy.

The plan responds to existing needs and anticipated concerns for congestion, safety, access, and connectivity. The planning process requires a cooperative effort between multiple jurisdictions, key stakeholders, and citizens. Designed to create an open dialogue among the larger community, the planning process aimed to create a more nimble, adaptable plan for the future. The process flow chart below describes the planning process of the *Connections 2040 RMP*.

PROCESS FLOW CHART



Previous Planning Efforts

The table below and on the following pages inventories previous plans and documents completed in the CRTPA area. Organized by geography, the inventory summarizes planning efforts and includes comprehensive plans, corridor studies, bicycle/pedestrian plans, feasibility studies and vision plans. These plans were referenced during the development of recommendations for the *Connections 2040 RMP*.

Table 1.1 - Previous Planning Efforts

Name	Adopted	Description
Regional Mobility Plan (2035)	November 2010	The 2035 Regional Mobility Plan is the Long Range Plan for the Capital Region. This plan outlines transportation projects that will be updated every five years. The plan includes short-term and long-term strategies and actions which will contribute to an integrated multimodal transportation system which is safe and efficient.
Big Bend Scenic Byway Five-Year Corridor Management Plan	2012	Every five years, a review of the Scenic Highway Corridor Management Plan must be completed; this last five-year update was completed in January 2012.
Northwest Florida Transportation Corridor Authority 2013 Master Plan	April 2013	Enhance the transportation network including highways, railways, seaports and airports within the northwest region of Florida.
Capital City to the Sea Trails Master Plan	April 2014	A series of shared use paths that will connect various areas throughout Leon and Wakulla counties. Recommendations were created through extensive public involvement, stakeholder meetings with city, county, state, and national agencies, and data collection

Name	Adopted	Description
FDOT Work Program/CRTPA TIP	June 2014	The Transportation Improvements Program requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), such as the CRTPA, to prioritize transportation projects over a five-year period that are consistent with the MPO's Long Range Plan.
Gadsden County Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Master Plan	August 2012	A plan to provide Gadsden County with specific projects and policy recommendations focused on improving the quality of multimodal services.
Gadsden County Future Land Use Map Update, Existing Land Use Map Development, and Interstate-10 Interchange Economic Development Strategies	Not adopted; used to identify economic development areas in the county	A report that outline economic development strategies for Interstate-10 interchanges in Gadsden County as well as ELUM and FLUM updating.
Quincy Bypass Northern Loop Corridor Feasibility Study	Still under development	A study of a proposed bypass around the City of Quincy.
Gadsden County Evaluation and Appraisal Report	August 2009	Evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan
Quincy Beautiful		A plan to bring economic opportunities to the downtown area of Quincy and start redevelopment projects within the community redevelopment area.

Name	Adopted	Description
Jefferson County Transportation Plan		This transportation plan describes existing conditions of Jefferson County and what transportation enhancements and opportunities will allow preservation and development for the future of Jefferson County.
Jefferson County 2014 Vision Action Plan	June 2014	Jefferson County along with the County's EDC created an initiative to take previously identified goals and priorities, and put them into tangible action items.
Jefferson County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	January 2013	The Plan is an effort to create a vision and framework for a safe and robust bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure network that connects the City of Monticello, rural unincorporated communities in the County, other communities in the region, major employers, schools, and other desired destinations.
Vision for a Sustainable Future – Jefferson County	Never formally adopted, though it was accepted; the recommendations were incorporated into the Jefferson County 2014 Vision Action Plan, which was adopted in June 2014	The Florida State University Department of Urban and Regional Planning studio developed recommendations for Jefferson County. These recommendations were developed from existing conditions, public input, community interactions, and a suitability analysis.
Comprehensive Plan 2025 Jefferson County Florida	July 1990; amended 2012	A plan outlining updates to the FLU, traffic circulation element, house element, utilities, conservation, coastal management, recreation and open space, intergovernmental coordination, and capital improvements for Jefferson County.

Name	Adopted	Description
2013 Tallahassee-Leon County Greenways Master Plan	May 2013	The Tallahassee-Leon County Greenways Program strives to create a community-wide system of connected natural areas and trails for the public; The Greenways Master Plan proposed shared use paths, bicycle routes, and linkages to enhance connectivity throughout the community.
Tallahassee- Leon County 2030 Comprehensive Plan	July 1990; amended biannually	The Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan consists of goals, objectives, and policies for growth within the area.
Mahan Drive (U.S. 90) Corridor Study	April 2004	The study was developed to manage future development along the corridor through measures that address land-use, transportation facilities, and neighborhood preservation.
Midtown Action Plan	March 2011	This study focused on growth within the midtown area of Tallahassee specifically in regards to pedestrian activity, land use patterns, and creating a sense of place.
Gaines Street Report	2001	A streetscape project to help revitalize Gaines Street from Lake Bradford Road to Monroe Street
Monroe Adams Corridor Action Plan	June 2011	A plan to connect neighborhoods, universities, and local businesses around the Monroe-Adams corridor to create a more thriving urban area.
The Market District Action Plan	October 2011	A plan to take the currently disconnected Market District and make it a unified district with a strong identity, included a walk-thru with local stakeholders.

Name	Adopted	Description
Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington "Sense of Place" Initiative		A redevelopment of the Lake Jackson Town Center at Huntington.
Blueprint 2000		Blueprint 2000 funds focus on projects where the environment, economy, and social values complement one another and are interdependent. A few examples of projects which have been completed through Blueprint 2000 are Cascades Park, Capital Circle Southeast, and Franklin Boulevard.
Leon County Safe Routes to School	This document was not developed to be adopted; just to provide recommendations	This plan intended to be completed through infrastructure improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as programs and policies to encourage these activities.
Leon County Sales Tax	Sales Tax first passed in 1989, Sales Tax Committee approved September 2011	The Leon County Sales Tax Committee was developed in 2011 to make recommendations to when an infrastructure sales tax referendum would occur, and provide feedback on projects. The committee decided that the sales tax be split where 80% is allocated to Blueprint, 10% to Leon County, and 10% City of Tallahassee. 12% is dedicated to economic development.

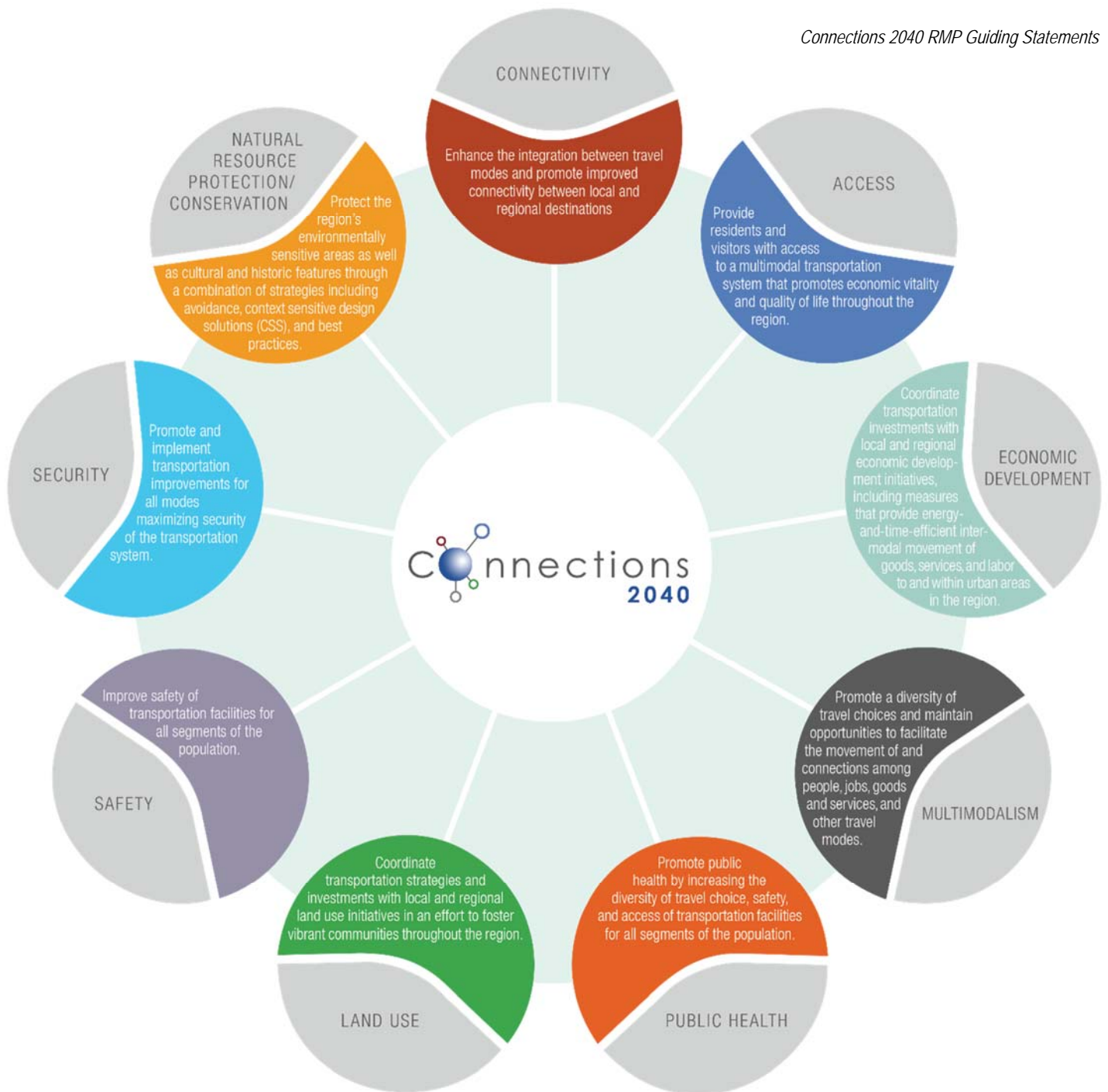
Name	Adopted	Description
Southwood Planned Unit Development (PUD)	July 2004	Southwood is a master-planned community of homes and commercial development. Green space, parks, and a golf course are also included in the community. Residents and visitors can walk to shops, school, and other facilities while also only being a short drive from other destinations.
Tallahassee Sidewalk Plan	This document was not developed to be adopted; just to provide recommendations	An initiative undertaken by Tallahassee and Leon County to enhance pedestrian facilities through projects such as the 6 th Avenue Pedestrian Enhancements and the Sense of Place effort.
Tennessee Street Mobility and Alternatives Study	Ongoing	The study developed alternatives for Tennessee Street that would improve safety and mobility for all modes. The chosen recommendation included improvements such as adding bicycle lanes, upgrading transit facilities, and implementing wide sidewalks.
Woodville Highway Corridor Plan	Summer 2014	The study also focused on improvements to the corridor including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, access management, and aesthetics.
Tennessee Street Lane Reduction	Nothing has been submitted on this project	Initiative to reduce lanes along Tallahassee's major east-west route, Tennessee Street. Plans still remain fluid.

Project Goals

Goals and Objectives

The first step in developing a long range transportation plan is to establish planning goals and objectives. The *Connections 2040 RMP* guiding statements reflect the community's vision for the transportation system as well as the MAP-21 Planning Factors. The guiding statements also help identify ways to prioritize potential recommendations, an important step as the Capital Region faces a shortage of transportation dollars to fund identified needs.

Generally, the guiding statements respond to MAP-21 planning factors, local context, as well as regional needs. Each of the guiding statements includes a key phrase with a supporting description. Taken as a whole, the statements outline strategies that aim to guide regional growth.



Community Outreach

Citizen involvement—whether through direct engagement or by the input of community representatives—is an important part of successful planning. The objective of public involvement during the RMP was to:

- Increase awareness
- Create opportunities for public input
- Ensure that the plan accurately reflects the values and priorities of the region.

The *Connections 2040 RMP* relies on the notion that fully understanding the community's vision for transportation and the dynamics involved in achieving it requires a collaborative approach. As a result, local staff and the project team reached out to the community during three key phases during the planning process: Project Initiation (visioning); Data Discovery, Sharing, and Analysis; and Plan Adoption. The overall public engagement strategy was designed to be compliant with Title VI requirements. A comprehensive inventory of public engagement materials and collected data can be found in the Technical Appendix.

Outreach tools for the *Connections 2040 RMP* included the following techniques:

- CRTPA Board Meetings/Board Retreats
- CMAC and TAC meetings
- County work sessions
- Stakeholder interviews
- Public workshops
- Project questionnaires
- Phone surveys
- Public/community events
- Newsletters and email blasts
- Project website
- Social media
- Interactive maps

Picture taken from Gadsden County Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Master Plan



The CRTPA is governed by two committees: the Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee (CMAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

CMAC

Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee

Comprised of individuals in the community and representatives of agencies and transportation interests. The committee's purpose is to provide comment and guidance to the CRTPA board on transportation planning and policy issues.

TAC

Technical Advisory Committee

The TAC is comprised of local and state planners and engineers with expertise in transportation planning, engineering, and management. The committee provides technical reviews of CRTPA plans, policies, and projects.

Plan Organization

This report is organized with an emphasis on the recommendations and is supported by a series of appendices including: Public Outreach Compendium; Existing Conditions Report; StarMetro Transit Development Plan; Opportunities Plan; Feasibility Study Areas; and FDOT 2040 Revenue Forecast.

Key features of the *Connections 2040 RMP* can be found in the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction to *Connections 2040 RMP*.

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions – Provides a summary of observations collected from the Existing Conditions Report.

Chapter 3: Multimodal Needs – Provides a multitude of items including: Growth Assessment; Methods; Complete Streets; Opportunities Plan; and the Needs Plan.

Chapter 4: Prioritization – Offers an inventory of candidate projects, evaluation criteria, and evaluation results.

Chapter 5: Financial Analysis – Provides an estimate of projected revenues and project costs.

Chapter 6: Recommendations – Is a summary organized by county that includes documented needs and inventory of projects included in the Cost Feasible Plan.

Chapter 7: Continued Coordination – Identifies continued coordination efforts and relations of ongoing planning with the RMP as well as existing and future trends.