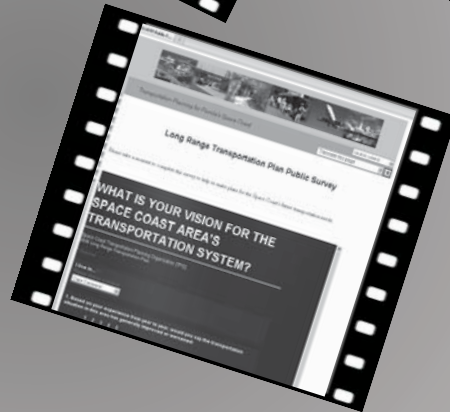


Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization

Public Participation Plan

Adopted April 8, 2010



SPACE COAST
TPO
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

SPACE COAST TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

MISSION STATEMENT

*To provide Space Coast local governments, agencies
and citizens a forum for cooperative intermodal
transportation decision-making to assure excellence
in mobility and safety.*

SPACE COAST TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Public participation is a proactive process which is vital when developing comprehensive transportation plans. The Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization is committed to engaging as many residents and business interests as possible in its transportation planning process and programming activities. This Plan is intended to make sure that public participation is an integral and effective part of the TPO's activities so decisions are made with the benefit and consideration of public perspectives.

REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS

This Public Participation Plan reflects the current policies of the Space Coast TPO. As evaluation of public participation occurs, it may be necessary to revise those policies. Revisions and amendments to the PPP will be documented in this section.

Adoption of the Public Involvement Plan

MPO Public Involvement Plan, Adopted November 9, 2000

Revisions and Amendments

MPO Public Involvement Plan (Revision), Adopted February 12, 2004

MPO Authorization re: Public Review/Comment of MPO Public Involvement Plan Updates, November 9, 2006

MPO Public Involvement Plan (Revision), Adopted February 8, 2007

Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization Public Participation Plan – 2010 Edition (Update), DRAFT, February 11, 2010

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The preparation of this report has been financed in part through grant(s) from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, under the State Planning and Research Program, Section 505 [or Metropolitan Planning Program, Section 104(f)] of Title 23, U.S. Code. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the U. S. Department of Transportation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Engaging the public early and often in the decision-making process is critical to the success of any transportation plan or program. This concept has been encouraged and required by Federal and State legislation for many years.

The purpose of the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization's (TPO) *Public Participation Plan – 2010 Edition* (PPP) is to update the guidelines used to ensure that public participation is an integral and effective part of TPO activities and that decisions are made with the benefit and consideration of the general public's perspectives. This Plan contains the policies, objectives and evaluation tools used by the TPO for public involvement measures.

The goal of the Space Coast TPO's Public Participation Plan is to provide the public with accurate information about transportation planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner by:

- ❖ **Informing** the public of transportation meetings and other events.
- ❖ **Educating** the public regarding their role in the transportation planning and decision-making process.
- ❖ **Involving** the public by providing opportunities early and often in the transportation planning and decision-making process.
- ❖ **Reaching out** to all communities to inform, educate and involve, with special emphasis on those communities with individuals who have been underrepresented and/or underserved.
- ❖ **Improving** the public involvement process.

Every three years a review of the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization's Public Participation Plan shall be conducted and updated, as necessary. This Plan is continuously evaluated for possible improvements, and the public's comments are always welcome. Staff can be contacted by calling the TPO office (321-690-6890) or email www.spacecoasttpo.com.

NOTE: This document was developed pursuant to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which expired in September 2009. At the time of this writing, SAFETEA-LU has been extended and efforts are underway to reauthorize the law. Once new legislation is signed in to law, a review of this Plan will be conducted to verify compliance.

INTRODUCTION

AUTHORITY

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 mandated that all urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000 establish a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (“3C”) planning process, in order to be eligible to receive U.S. Department of Transportation funding. The 1974 Federal-Aid Highway Act formalized this process further, by mandating the creation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for all areas required to have a “3C” planning process.

In December 1991, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was signed into law. ISTEA was landmark legislation that introduced a comprehensive approach to address transportation issues by emphasizing innovation, intermodalism and flexibility. The approach begun under ISTEA was continued in 1998 with the adoption of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

On August 10, 2005 the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was enacted. SAFETEA-LU carried forward a strong federal emphasis on public involvement programs.

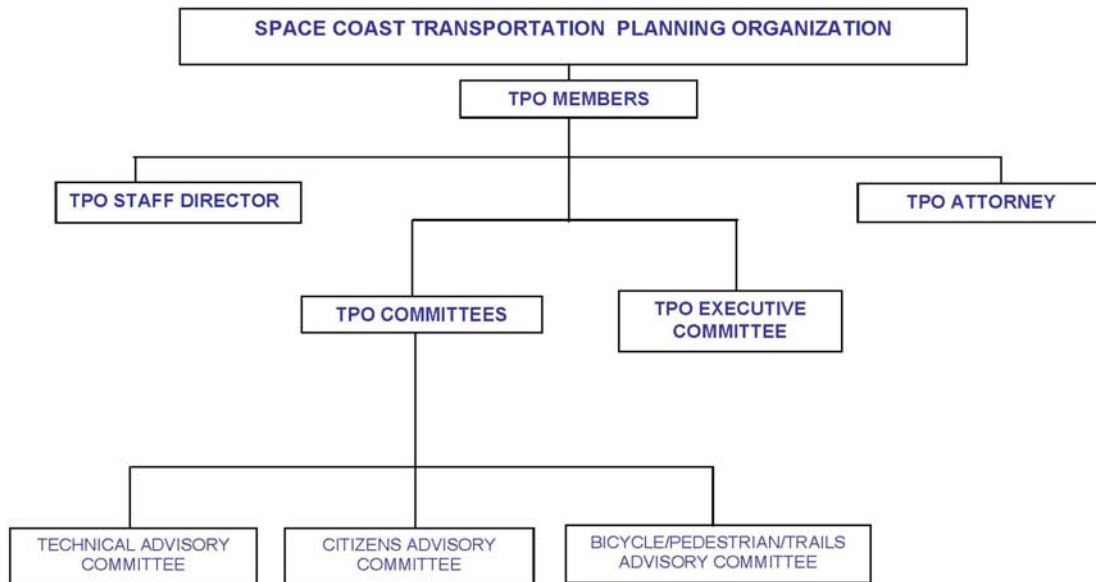
SAFETEA-LU expired in September 2009. Efforts are currently underway to reauthorize the law.

HISTORY AND COMPOSITION

The Brevard MPO was established in order to provide transportation planning services for the Palm Bay – Melbourne – Titusville urbanized area, as designated by the U.S. Census Bureau.

In July 2008, the Brevard Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Board voted to change the organization’s name to the “Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)”. This name change, which more accurately reflects the scope of our work, became effective on January 8, 2009.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization Board (TPO):

Purpose: The TPO is a policy board of nineteen (19) local elected officials charged with the responsibility of managing a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process that is consistent with local government comprehensive plans.

Membership: The membership of the Space Coast TPO has been established under Florida Statute 339.175(2)(b), and is set up through an Interlocal Agreement, as recorded on January 8, 2009, in Official Records Book 5906, Page 3023, Public Records of Brevard County, Florida.

Voting membership consists of:

Brevard County Board of County Commissioners: 5 members (1 from each District)
Canaveral Port Authority: 1 member
City of Cocoa: 1 member
City of Melbourne: 3 members
City of Palm Bay: 3 members
City of Rockledge: 1 member
City of Titusville: 2 members
City of West Melbourne: 1 member
North Beaches Coalition: 1 member (Cape Canaveral, Cocoa Beach)
South Beaches Coalition: 1 member (Satellite Beach, Indian Harbour Beach, Indialantic, Melbourne Beach)

Non-voting member:

Florida Department of Transportation District V Secretary
(or designee, generally FDOT's TPO liaison)

Non-voting advisors:

TPO General Counsel
TPO Staff Director

Alternates: With the exception of the Board of County Commissioners, every governmental entity appointing a regular voting delegate may also designate an alternate voting delegate to serve when its appointed regular voting delegate is absent from a meeting of the Governing Board. The appointed alternate member must be an elected official serving the same governmental entity or general-purpose local government with jurisdiction within all or part of the area that the regular member serves.

Through a staff services agreement, Brevard County provides staff support for the TPO. Current TPO Board and Committee membership lists can be found on the TPO website and are published each year in the Annual Report.

The Space Coast TPO is advised by three Committees. It is significant to note that the Technical Advisory Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee meetings are held jointly. This unique format allows a greater opportunity for in-depth discussions between the professional planners and engineers and the citizens who represent the voice of the general public. All meetings are open to the public and legal advertisements are published in local newspapers. Meeting notification (includes time, date and place of meeting) is also posted on the TPO website.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):

Purpose: Review of transportation technical studies and reports. The TAC provides the TPO Board with supporting technical information necessary to assist the Board in its policy making decisions.

Membership: The TAC consists of twenty-seven (27) voting members from local governments, the Brevard County School Board, St. Johns River Water Management District, Space Florida and FDOT (District Five). Members are technically qualified representatives of agencies responsible for planning and development. The appointing authority must provide the TPO staff director written notification of their representative (and alternate), which then is endorsed by the TPO Board.

Alternates: Each municipality, office, department, division, association, system, authority or board that designates a representative to the TAC may also designate, and the TPO may endorse, one (1) alternate representative.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC):

Purpose: The CAC is responsible for providing the TPO with citizen input into the transportation planning process. The CAC reviews transportation plans and programs and assists the TPO in understanding community needs as they pertain to transportation issues.

Membership: The composition of the CAC provides geographic and jurisdictional coverage of the TPO area. The CAC is composed of twenty-four (24) voting members who are appointed by each TPO Board member.

Alternates: Each County Commissioner, the Canaveral Port Authority and each city or town council/commission with a member serving on the TPO may designate, and the TPO may appoint, one (1) alternate for each CAC representative appointed.

Bicycle, Pedestrian & Trails Advisory Committee (BPTAC):

Purpose: The BPTAC addresses bicycle, pedestrian and trails planning and recommends policies to the TPO Board regarding bicycle/pedestrian/multi-use trail projects, enhancement projects and implementation of Bicycle/Pedestrian and Trails Plan(s).

Membership: The BPTAC is comprised of up to nineteen (19) members representing local law enforcement agencies, educators, engineers, local governments, bicycle retailers, realtors, avid cyclists, hikers, environmentalists and other interested citizens. The TPO Board must endorse all appointments.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization's previous Public Involvement Plan was adopted on February 8, 2007. This Plan is being updated as part of the TPO's ongoing commitment (and adopted public involvement policy) to actively evaluate and improve the public involvement process, and assure compliance with updated State and Federal requirements. The document name change to Public Participation Plan more accurately reflects the intent of this dynamic continual process.

SAFETEA-LU authorizes federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period from 2005 to 2009. SAFETEA-LU requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) [may also be known as Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs)] to provide for consideration of projects and strategies that will advance eight (8) transportation planning factors that:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Included in SAFETEA-LU was the expanded definition of "participation by interested parties." Broadly defined, "interested parties" includes groups and individuals who are affected by, or involved with, transportation in Brevard County (or in the region). Some examples include: representatives of Federal, State and local government agencies; elected officials; representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities and multi-use trails, the disabled, civic and social organizations, special interest groups, and representatives of neighborhood and homeowner associations. The definition may be expanded to include individuals within a designated area affected by a specific program or project, defined user identifiers such as zip codes, census block groups or areas of demographic clusters identified in the TPO's Community Characteristics Inventory.

5.

As outlined in SAFETEA-LU, public meetings must, to the extent feasible and reasonable, be held at accessible locations and times convenient to expected participants. All plans must be

available on a web site, and documents are to be written in easily understandable language. Further, SAFETEA-LU stresses the use of visual components (i.e. maps, photos) to enhance communications.

The Space Coast TPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) includes a proactive public involvement process that supports and encourages early and continuous opportunities for the public to express its views on transportation issues and to become active participants in the regional transportation planning decision making process. As a “living document,” this Plan will be continually reviewed a minimum of every 3 years, or as needed, for possible revisions.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

General Purpose:

Meaningful and effective public participation is essential to the successful implementation of any transportation planning project or program. Engaging citizens in the transportation planning process promotes successful problem solving, brings in diverse voices and new ideas, allows for greater consideration of local and regional concerns, needs and values, and gives the public a sense of ownership of the developed solutions. This PPP outlines the guidelines used by the Space Coast TPO during the course of public participation activities. This Plan also contains the goals, policies, objectives and tools used by the TPO for public involvement measures.

Overview:

The Space Coast TPO actively pursues public involvement in four areas:

1. Regular and special business meetings of the TPO and its advisory committees are conducted in an open public forum with prior notification and provisions for receiving public comment, in accordance with Florida Law.
2. Development of the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), State of the System Report and Project Priorities include opportunities for public involvement and comment prior to adoption by the TPO.
3. Individual planning projects, such as corridor studies, have individual public involvement components, including project-specific Public Participation Plans.
4. Ongoing updates of TPO activities are provided to the public in several ways, including the TPO website, broadcasting of TPO meetings on Space Coast Government Television (SCGTV), print media coverage, flyers, newsletters and electronic newsletter bulletins.

General guidelines followed by the Space Coast TPO to encourage continuing public participation include:

- Providing timely information about transportation planning projects, issues and processes to interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to local and regional concerns). Information may be sent electronically, direct mail, print advertisements and/or SCGTV.
- Giving adequate public notice of transportation planning activities and allowing time for public review and comment as pertains to the TIP, the LRTP, the UPWP and other transportation plans and work products. If the final draft of any transportation plan differs significantly from the one available for public comment, then an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan will be made available prior to any decision being made by the TPO Board. Reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of major work products will be afforded.
- Determining the needs of those who may be underserved by transportation systems, including but not limited to the transportation disadvantaged, minorities, the elderly, youths, persons with disabilities, and individuals living in low-income households.
- Employing visualization techniques (i.e. diagrams, maps, pictures) to supplement and enhance program descriptions in order to optimize public understanding of issues and concepts.

TPO WORK PRODUCTS

Public participation is a valuable tool used to shape plans to assure that work products are reflective of and responsive to the needs of the communities that we serve. The TPO's goal is to assure that work products are reflective of and responsive to the needs of the communities that we serve. The following are identified as TPO core products. All work products are available on the TPO website and can be made available in hard copy from the TPO office, upon request.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP):

Comment period: ongoing throughout development process Web page: www.spacecoasttpo.com E-mail: tpostaff@spacecoasttpo.com Schedule: At least every five (5) years.
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The TPO is required to develop and adopt a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is the focal point of the TPOs planning and programming activities. The plan addresses a 20-year planning horizon (at a minimum) and includes long-range and short-range strategies and actions to support the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Identified transportation system needs are evaluated, and the plan presents those priority projects which can reasonably be achieved given available and forecasted funds and current and projected costs.

The LRTP has a specific Public Participation Plan which is posted on the TPO website. The TPO posts technical memorandums, presentations and related background information online throughout the LRTP development process. Public outreach meetings are held at various locations and public comment is also taken throughout the process. Upon completion of the entire draft plan, availability will be publicized on the TPO website, through a news release in local paper(s) and various other sources, as available. This draft LRTP will be posted on the TPO website for a public review and comment period which will last at least 30 days.

Amendments are periodically made, between major updates, as new projects, funding or programs arise. The public comment process for LRTP amendments is also 30 days.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

Comment period: 30 days
Web page: www.spacecoasttpo.com
E-mail: tpostaff@spacecoasttpo.com
Schedule: Annually

The Brevard Urban Area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a prioritized list of multi-modal federally funded transportation projects proposed for implementation during the next five years. Project examples include adding additional lanes to existing roads, interchange construction or modification, improvements to intersections, bicycle/pedestrian/trail facilities, transit amenities and seaport, airport, space and rail projects. A project must be in the TPOs approved TIP in order to receive federal funds. Projects included in the TIP must also be consistent with the approved LRTP. Information concerning transportation improvement projects funded with local sources is also included, when provided by local governments.

Prior to the TIP being presented to the TPO Board for consideration, the draft TIP is presented at an advertised public meeting and is posted on the TPO website for review and comment. Once approved, the TPO has an Interactive web-based site which allows the public to utilize the information in a flexible, visual format. Visitors can generate either the entire TIP document, including maps, or a smaller custom designed document covering only those projects of particular interest. The document may also be viewed in its entirety or in summary form when downloaded from the TPO website. Hard copies are available, upon request, from the TPO staff office.

The TIP may be amended should there be a change in funding or project specifics. Administrative modifications to the TIP are discussed in public meetings where comments are accepted. The amended version replaces the original document, with the amended date(s) noted on the front cover.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):

Comment period: 30 days
Web page: www.spacecoasttpo.com
E-mail: tpostaff@spacecoasttpo.com
Schedule: Bi-Annually

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a working budgetary document. All federally funded planning activities and studies have to be in the UPWP and have to be developed through required planning factors. Each task contains a description of work accomplished through the prior UPWP, the methodology that will be used in the upcoming years, the responsible agency, programmed budget and funding source.

The UPWP is reviewed and discussed at the regularly scheduled TAC/CAC meetings and the TPO Board public meetings. The draft document is posted on the TPO website for an open comment period of a least 30 days. The approved UPWP is also posted on the TPO website.

Public Participation Plan (PPP):

Comment period: 45 days
Web page: www.spacecoasttpo.com
E-mail: tpostaff@spacecoasttpo.com
Schedule: Every 3 years, or as needed

The Public Participation Plan remains an integral function of program operations during the development of TPO work products, board meetings and day-to-day functions. The purpose of this Plan is to provide a framework from which to guide the public participation process in future transportation planning projects and safety education efforts. The PPP outlines underlying policies, objectives, strategies and activities to be considered and engaged to achieve the goals of the public participation process.

State of the System Report:

Web page: www.spacecoasttpo.com
E-mail: tpostaff@spacecoasttpo.com
Schedule: Annually

Throughout the year, TPO staff, FDOT and local governments collect and share roadway network data. This information is evaluated using performance measures (such as safety and congestion) to identify overall mobility trends and to locate and rank congested corridors. Findings are compiled and presented in the annual State of the System Report (SOS). The SOS is used as technical guidance by the TPO when developing project priorities. The SOS is reviewed and discussed at the regularly scheduled TAC/CAC and TPO public meetings, where public comment is considered. The approved SOS is also posted on the TPO website.

Project Priorities:

Web page: www.spacecoasttpo.com
E-mail: tpostaff@spacecoasttpo.com
Schedule: Annually

Using the State of the System list of ranked projects as technical guidance, the TPO annually submits to the Florida Department of Transportation a prioritized list of projects for implementation in Brevard County. These priorities are used by FDOT to program State and Federal transportation funds. Programming commitments made by FDOT are included in its Five-Year Work Program and the TPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects on the Priority List come from three primary sources: local government requests, citizens and the State of the System Report. The development of a Priority List is the important first step in the process of implementing transportation improvement projects.

Prior to the Project Priorities being presented to the TPO Board for consideration, the draft list is presented at an advertised public meeting. The Project Priorities are then reviewed and discussed at the regularly scheduled TAC/CAC and TPO public meetings, where public comment is considered. The approved Project Priorities List is posted on the TPO website.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL: TO PROVIDE THE PUBLIC WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SERVICES AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT IN A CONVENIENT AND TIMELY MANNER.

Policy 1: The TPO shall actively engage the public in the transportation planning process, according to the goals, policies and objectives contained in this Public Participation Plan and State and Federal law.

Objective 1.1: The TPO shall maintain an up-to-date database of contacts, including (at a minimum) the following representatives:

- a. Elected Officials;
- b. Local Government Staff;
- c. Transportation Agencies (seaport, airports, transit, etc.);
- d. Local Media;
- e. Homeowner Associations;
- f. Civic and Advocacy Groups;
- g. Special Interest Groups;
- h. Brevard County Libraries (for public display);
- i. Individuals expressing an interest in transportation planning activities;
- j. Representatives of users of Pedestrian Walkways;
- k. Representatives of users of Bicycle Transportation Facilities;
- l. Representatives of users of Trail Facilities (Pedestrian, Bicycle, etc.)
- m. Representatives of traditionally underserved individuals and/or community(ies). This may include: low-income, elderly, racial and ethnic minorities; and,
- n. Representatives of emergency service providers and users.

Objective 1.2: The TPO shall, when feasible, mail and/or e-mail meeting announcements/invitations to the TPO contact list and/or to targeted groups for upcoming transportation activities.

Objective 1.3: The TPO shall e-mail, as warranted, an “E-News” flyer to keep citizens informed of transportation issues, upcoming meetings and other transportation-related information on the Space Coast.

Policy 2: The TPO shall keep the public informed of on-going transportation related activities on a continuous basis.

Objective 2.1: The TPO shall make all publications and work products readily available to the public via the Internet and at the TPO staff office.

Objective 2.2: TPO staff shall be available to provide general and project-specific information at a central location during normal business hours, and after hours at the request of groups such as homeowner associations, with reasonable notice.

Objective 2.3: The TPO shall produce a newsletter for distribution to the TPO contact list. The newsletter will include, at a minimum:

- Updates on current or recently completed projects
- Announcements of upcoming meetings
- Significant program information
- Safety education information
- Contact information

Objective 2.4: The TPO shall maintain an Internet web site, that will:

- Be continuously updated and maintained in order to provide the most current available information
- Contain, at a minimum, the following information:
 - a. Contact information (mailing address, e-mail, phone and fax numbers);
 - b. Current TPO and advisory committee(s) membership;
 - c. Brief descriptions of current projects;
 - d. Work products and publications (TIP, LRTP, UPWP, Traffic Counts, etc.);
 - e. Comment/Question form(s); and,
 - f. Links to transportation related organizations/agencies (i.e. FHWA, FDOT, etc.).

Policy 3: The TPO shall encourage the involvement of *all* Brevard residents in the transportation planning process.

Objective 3.1: Target audiences shall be identified for each planning study conducted by the TPO, including residents, business and property owners and traditionally underserved and under-represented populations, including but not limited to, non-English speaking individuals, low income households, and minority households within the study area.

Objective 3.2: The TPO shall, whenever feasible, hold public meetings at a site convenient to potentially affected citizens.

Policy 4: The TPO shall strive to continuously improve public involvement.

Objective 4.1: The TPO shall continuously evaluate public involvement techniques.

Objective 4.2: This Public Participation Plan and the Evaluation Handbook shall be reviewed and adopted, with revisions if necessary, *at least* every three (3) years in order to improve the effectiveness of public participation.

Policy 5: The TPO shall be involved in public participation activities for individual transportation improvement projects from the planning phase through construction.

Objective 5.1: The TPO shall actively assist the Florida Department of Transportation, local governments and transportation agencies in the development and implementation of public participation techniques for planning and other studies, including Major Corridor/Feasibility Studies, Project Development and Environmental Studies (PD&E), Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) evaluations, and other transportation planning activities.

Objective 5.2: The TPO shall cooperate with the Florida Department of Transportation to implement their Community Awareness Program (CAP) and other public outreach efforts that the Department undertakes for specific projects.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

The TPO relies on the distribution of printed materials, electronic communications, broadcast/print media and staff presentations to keep the public informed about its activities and programs. Public participation is an on-going activity of the TPO, with several techniques used on a continuous basis. Public participation is also an integral part of one-time activities such as corridor studies, and regularly repeated activities including the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) updates.

This section contains descriptions of public participation tools currently used by the TPO. Included with the description is a list of activities that each tool may be used for. In order to present a more comprehensive picture of available techniques, additional tools used by other agencies are also described.

Web Site

Description: Many people use the internet as their main source of data and information. The physically disabled are especially able to use this source to both receive input and to provide feedback, while not being required to physically attend meetings. The Space Coast TPO first launched its web site (www.spacecoasttpo.com) in 1998, and it has proven to be an invaluable tool in the TPO's overall PPP. This user friendly site includes basic information about the TPO process, members, calendar of meetings/events, agendas, contact information and links to the TPOs interactive TIP and Traffic Count sites. Over the years, the site has been expanded to include information about specific projects undertaken by the TPO. All major work products, such as the UPWP, TIP and LRTP are available for downloading from the site, as well as several maps and brochures. The TIP and Traffic Counts include an option to link with interactive sites. This site also provides links to local and national transportation related sites. Additionally, individuals are able to submit comments. The site is maintained and updated by TPO staff.

Activities: The site is used as an informational/educational tool, as well as to advertise opportunities for public participation. It also affords the public an opportunity to offer comments and suggestions.

TPO Master Database

Description: TPO staff maintain a master database of all contacts representing business, civic, Federal, State and local agencies and interested public. The database includes committee membership, mailing information, phone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses and web sites. The database is used for maintaining up-to-date committee membership lists, special interest/advocacy groups and homeowner association contacts, and is the foundation of the newsletter and special event mailing list. The database is also used to establish and maintain a list of e-mail contacts for electronic meeting notifications and announcements.

Activities: The database is used to enhance public participation activities.

Advertisements

Description: Florida Administrative Code (FAC) requires advertisement of any public meeting where a decision could be made or that may be attended by more than one elected official. TPO, TAC/CAC and other meetings, as required, are advertised. Meeting notices are regularly published in *Florida Today* (the local newspaper with the largest circulation), Spanish language and minority based publications.

Activities: Regular and other meetings seeking public input are posted.

TPO Newsletter

Description: MPO staff produces a newsletter, generally on a quarterly schedule, that is distributed to interested citizens as well as representatives of advocacy groups, elected officials, municipalities, the media, private entities and other agencies. Citizens are added to the distribution list, by their own request. Opportunities to request being added to the distribution list occur during public meetings hosted by the TPO, on the TPO web site, and when citizens contact the TPO staff. An important goal of the newsletter is to inform the public of upcoming decisions to be made by the TPO or other agencies, so that they have time to prepare meaningful comments prior to the decision being finalized.

Activities: The newsletter is used to inform and educate the public, as well as to promote regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications and work products.

Display Ads

Description: Eye-catching ads are used to promote meetings that are not regularly scheduled, such as corridor study workshops. These ads are published in the local section of the newspaper with the intent of reaching a larger audience than those that typically read legal ads. The TPO actively seeks out minority publications for placement of display ads in English and Spanish to increase public participation from Brevard County's various minority groups.

Activities: Project specific meetings, workshops, open houses or hearings.

Project Specific Newsletters

Description: As appropriate, project specific newsletters are published to communicate concepts and plans and to inform the public and stakeholders about opportunities to influence transportation decisions. These newsletters may be mailed or e-mailed to targeted residents, businesses and property owners in the area that are expected to be impacted by a particular project or program. Information regarding upcoming project meetings, alternatives being proposed in the area, and other related project news is reported in these newsletters.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

Other Newsletters

Description: When project specific newsletters are not used, articles may be prepared for publication in other newsletters produced by municipalities, homeowner associations, church groups, civic groups, or others that may have an interest in the projects. These articles are subject to the publication dates and space restrictions of the individual publishers.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

Description: Direct mailings are used to target a particular audience to announce upcoming meetings, activities or provide information. Letters, flyers and postcards are best suited for this category. These should be used for project fact sheets and overall updates to a planning process. An area may be targeted for a direct mailing because of a potential impact(s) from a project. Groups are targeted that may have an interest in a specific issue, for example avid cyclists may be targeted for greenways and trail projects.

Activities: Project specific meetings, workshops, open houses, corridor studies, small area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

Press Releases

Description: Formal press releases are sent to local media (newspaper, television and radio) to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by the TPO or their committees.

Activities: Corridor or other planning studies, workshops, open houses, public hearings and other TPO (and related) activities.

Space Coast Government Television (SCGTV)

Description: Brevard County maintains a cable television network that is available to all cable television subscribers within the County. All TPO meetings are televised live on SCGTV, and rebroadcast throughout the month. SCGTV also broadcasts select meetings, both live and pre-recorded, and short informative programs about departmental activities or projects of interest to the entire population.

Activities: Broadcast of TPO monthly meetings, regular and special TPO activities.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Description: Space Coast Government Television (SCGTV), as well as other local television and radio stations, provide airtime for PSAs used to promote TPO related programs such as bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Activities: Transportation safety educational messages.

Description: Written scripts are provided to facility managers (i.e. sports stadium) for announcements before and after sporting events. Typically the announcements offer transportation safety tips and reminders (i.e. Don't Drive Drunk, Buckle Up). The intent is to increase safety awareness among the general public and encourage interest in transportation issues.

Activities: Transportation safety messages.

Project Specific Web Sites

Description: For individual projects (i.e. corridor studies) that are typically performed using consulting services, project specific web sites are often used. These sites are used when project information is too extensive to be included on the TPO web site. Project web sites can contain study area maps, meeting announcements, descriptions of potential alternatives, comment forms, user surveys and project team contact information. Links to project web sites are provided on the TPO web site.

Activities: Corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies.

Project Workshops/Open Houses

Description: These are public meetings that are open and informal, with project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis, and/or through an open microphone. Short presentations may be given at these meetings. Project specific meetings provide information to the public and are used to solicit public comment(s). Meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities.

Activities: Corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies, annual TIP and Project Priority process, Long Range Transportation Plan updates and other major TPO activities.

Small Group Meetings

Description: During projects such as planning studies, targeted meetings are held with specific small groups that have an interest in the project. Meetings could be with homeowner or neighborhood associations, civic groups, special interest groups, municipal and county planners and engineers, or other groups of affected or interested parties.

Activities: Early plan development, corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies and other TPO activities.

Description: The face-to-face communications available through public speaking assures the greatest opportunity to inform the public and encourage their involvement in the transportation planning process. TPO staff schedule speaking engagements before civic, community and business groups interested in transportation issues and related topics in Brevard County. This provides a forum for groups to learn about transportation planning issues, including long and short term projects. Additionally, educational talks, forums and presentations are offered which can address various safety topics, most specifically in the areas of bicycle and pedestrian safety (including bicycle helmet use and fitting).

Activities: Planning studies, project priority process, bicycle and pedestrian safety and other major TPO activities.

E-Mail Announcements

Description: Meeting announcements and TPO information is e-mailed to interested individuals and groups who have submitted their e-mail address to TPO staff. A free electronic e-mail newsletter, "E-News", is sent to all interested parties in order to keep citizens informed of transportation issues, upcoming meetings and other transportation related information on the Space Coast.

Activities: Corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies, regular meetings, public hearings, workshops, open houses, and other major TPO activities.

Fact Sheets

Description: Used to provide summary information regarding TPO policies, programs and projects. Fact sheets can be distributed at public meetings, on the TPO web site, and in public places such as libraries and community centers. Individuals and special interest groups may request fact sheets directly from the TPO staff office. Informational items may provide background information on an upcoming planning project or activity, or be used as general educational material.

Activities: Corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies, annual TIP and Project Priority process, Long Range Transportation Plan updates, bicycle and pedestrian safety information and other TPO activities.

Posters and Flyers

Description: Posters and flyers are used to announce meetings and events and are distributed for public display in public places such as municipal buildings (i.e. City Halls), libraries and community centers. Special interest groups, homeowner associations and individuals may request posters and flyers for distribution and display. The announcement may contain a brief description of the purpose of the meeting, the time(s) and location(s), contact information and website address where additional information can be obtained. Posters and flyers may be used to reach a large audience that cannot be reached using direct mailings, newsletters, e-mails, etc.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, other planning studies, regular and special TPO activities.

TPO Logo

Description: A logo representing the TPO is used to identify products and publications of the TPO. A logo helps the public become familiar with the different activities of the TPO by providing a means of recognizing TPO products.

Activities: TPO publications including those developed by consultants working on TPO sponsored projects.

Feedback Forms

Description: Feedback forms are often used to solicit public comment on specific issues presented at a workshop, open house or other public meeting. Feedback forms may be very general in nature, or may ask for comments on very specific information. For example, a feedback form may ask for comments on specific alignment alternatives considered during a corridor study, or may ask for a person's general feelings about any aspect of transportation. Feedback forms may also be included in publications and on web sites to solicit input regarding the subject of the publication and/or the format of the publication or web site.

Activities: Feedback forms are typically used at public workshops, open houses, hearings and other TPO events.

Description: Surveys are used when very specific input from the public is desired. A survey can be used in place of comment cards to ask very specific questions such as whether a person supports a specific alignment in a corridor study. Surveys are also used to gather technical data during corridor and planning studies. For example, participants may be asked about their daily travel patterns. Surveys can also be used to develop community profiles to assist the TPO in making transportation decisions that compliment the values and desires of the citizens of Brevard County.

Activities: School travel, Corridor studies, small area studies and other planning studies.

Exhibits at Events

Description: Formal meetings provide a good forum for public education and input; however, informational booths at events like art festivals, community fairs, and other recreational and social gatherings attract people who would not typically attend a formal meeting. As appropriate, TPO staff will attend special events to increase public education and solicit names and addresses of people who would like to receive advance notification of future opportunities to participate in the TPO process.

Activities: Planning studies, project priority process, bicycle/pedestrian/trails safety education and other TPO programs.

Community Characteristics Inventory

Description: Community Characteristics are used to identify the existing transportation network, socio-economic variables and environmental factors needed for use in both short term and long range transportation planning and management systems. A GIS program is used to identify areas demographically in order to provide the TPO the capability of assessing impact distribution by area, and target public involvement activities. Community Characteristics are used to assure that public involvement activities include representatives from diverse geographical, demographic and organizational areas that compose the TPO planning area. Community Characteristics also serve to support and encourage continuous improvement in the methods used to meet the public need for information and involvement. Ultimately, the use of Community Characteristics will increase attendance, participation, collaboration and diversity at meetings and events.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, other planning studies, annual TIP and Project Priority process, Long Range Transportation Plan updates, regular and special TPO activities.

Comment Cards

Description: To make sure that everyone has a voice in the planning process, comment cards are available at every public meeting, including board meetings. Comment cards serve as an additional way for the public to share comments and provide feedback in a way that may be more comfortable than voicing an opinion during an open meeting. Comment forms may be very general in nature, or may ask for very specific feedback. For example, a comment form may ask for comments on specific alignment alternatives considered during a corridor study, or may ask for a person's general feelings about any aspect of transportation. Comment forms may also be included in publications and on web sites to solicit input regarding the subject of the publication and/or the format of the publication or web site.

Activities: Long Range Plan, Project Priorities and other regular and special TPO activities.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVALUATION

In order to assure an effective public participation program, the Plan must create processes that are effective and meaningful for participants. Processes developed to engage the public in transportation planning activities must be evaluated to measure results and make sure techniques are successful at achieving the Plan's goals and objectives. By continuously evaluating public participation activities, it is possible to discontinue activities that are ineffective and to improve or add new public participation activities to the TPO transportation decision-making process. Guidelines for the evaluation of public participation techniques are contained in the *Space Coast TPO Public Participation Evaluation Handbook*.

The evaluation handbook describes public participation techniques, outlines the steps to be taken to evaluate those techniques, identifies measures to quantify success rates and outlines strategies to improve the TPO's public participation process. The appendices of the evaluation handbook contain samples of public participation tools, general and project-specific evaluations and general and project-specific improvement strategies. The evaluation handbook text and sample evaluation and improvement strategy forms are contained in Appendix A of this Public Participation Plan.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN EVALUATION HANDBOOK

Text and Samples

A(1)

Introduction

The Federal Highway Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation require the TPO to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of public participation activities for the transportation planning process. By continuously evaluating public participation activities, it is possible to discontinue activities that are ineffective and to improve or add new public participation activities to the TPO program. The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidelines for the evaluation of public participation techniques.

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) includes descriptions of the various public involvement techniques that can be employed by the TPO. The PPP also includes the public involvement goal, policies and objectives of the TPO.

The following excerpts from the Evaluation Handbook provide a basic overview of the public involvement evaluation process. It outlines the steps to be taken to evaluate the public participation techniques identified in the PPP, identifies measures to quantify success rates and outlines strategies to improve the TPO's public participation process.

The Evaluation Handbook is intended to be a dynamic document, with additions and changes based on each evaluation that is performed. The Handbook should be reviewed *at least* every three years, in conjunction with the PPP, to ensure that appropriate changes are being implemented by the TPO.

Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals

In order to determine the effectiveness of public participation tools, they must be evaluated and compared to established performance measures and goals. The typical methods for evaluating the effectiveness of public participation tools are surveys and quantitative statistical analysis. This section briefly describes evaluation methods used by the TPO. For each public involvement tool, performance goals and methods for meeting those goals are identified in Table 1.

Surveys

Description: Surveys typically consist of short, specific questions regarding public involvement tools that are on-going or that were used on a specific project. Surveys can be conducted in person, by phone, mail or e-mail. Face-to-face and telephone surveys provide quick responses and can be used when a respondent's answer may lead to a follow-up question. For example, respondents may be asked if advertisements are an effective notification tool. If the response is no, the surveyor can ask the respondent why advertisements are not effective and also what other tools they would prefer. In person and telephone surveys can target specific areas or groups or can be random samplings. Mail surveys may be used to provide a written record of the answers received from those responding. Mail-back surveys can be distributed at meetings, inside other publications, or by mailing directly to potential respondents. Respondents can be a targeted group, such as members of special interest groups or residents of specific areas, or they can be

randomly chosen. E-mail surveys, like mail surveys, provide a written record of responses. Unlike mail-back surveys, there is little to no reproduction or distribution cost to the TPO to send out the surveys, and little to no cost to respondents to participate. To use e-mail surveys, it is necessary to have e-mail addresses for the targeted respondents, and random distribution is generally not an option.

Statistical Analysis

Statistics can be used to determine the "return on the investment" of producing public participation tools. For example, the number of persons attending an activity can be compared to the number of persons that were notified of the activity. This type of evaluation can be an indicator of whether or not the tools used for public involvement are actually reaching the intended audience, or which tools had a greater response rate. Statistical analysis is used to evaluate survey responses and the results of the analysis are compared to the evaluation measures to determine the rate of success of public participation tools.

Public Participation Tools Evaluation

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Public Participation Plan	No measure - PPP should reflect the policies and practices of the TPO.	N/A.	Update at least every 3 years to incorporate the improvement strategies resulting from public involvement evaluations.
TPO Web Site	Number of times site is visited.	Minimum of 90 visits/month, 5% increase in visits/quarter.	Use other public involvement tools to increase advertisement of the web site.
TPO Master Database	Number of returned items.	Maximum of 2% return rate per mailing.	Make immediate corrections when items are returned.
Legal Advertisements	No measure – required by Florida Statutes.	N/A	N/A
TPO Newsletter	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of returns.	N/A. Return rate is addressed under TPO Master Database.	Continue items that receive favorable comments and correct or improve mistakes or items that receive negative comments.
Display Ads	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the ad. Ad formats may be modified based on specific comments received.	Pursue publication in a prominent location in the paper(s). Increase the size or modify the layout to make ads more visible and easily understood.

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Project Specific Newsletters	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they received a newsletter. -OR- Reaches a minimum of 85% of persons that are affected by a project.	Increase or decrease distribution to more accurately target an area that may be affected.
If no project specific newsletter: Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents were reached. - OR- Reaches a minimum of 80% of persons that are affected by a project. If in addition to project specific newsletter: Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees/ survey respondents were reached - OR- When combined with a project newsletter reaches a minimum of 95% of persons that are affected by a project.	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.		Provide information to the publishers of these newsletters in a timely fashion. Investigate all possible newsletters that may reach an affected area.

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Direct Mailings	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they received the mailing -OR- Reaches a minimum of 85% of persons that are affected by a project.	Increase/Decrease mailing list to more accurately target affected areas. Use the most up-to-date information from the Brevard County Property Appraiser and/or the TPO Community Profile to maintain the mailing list.
Press Releases	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.	No standard. Format may be modified based on specific comments received.	Encourage publication of press releases by keeping the media informed.
Space Coast Government Television (SCGTV)	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw or heard the meeting notice on SCGTV.	Provide information to SCGTV as soon as it is available to increase the air time. Encourage SCGTV to make the announcements prominent.
TV Message Board Scripts	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the meeting notice.	Provide information to SCGTV as soon as it is available to increase the air time. Encourage SCGTV to make the announcements prominent.
Public Service Announcements (PSAs)	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.	No standard. Format may be modified based on specific comments received.	Encourage airing of public service announcements by keeping SCGTV and the media informed.

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Public Event Messages	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	No standard. Format may be modified based on specific comments received.	Encourage facility managers (i.e. sports stadium) to include transportation safety messages in public announcements.
Project Specific Web Sites	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of hits.	Minimum of 30 hits per month. Increase of at least 10% over the life of the project. Expectations may be higher depending on the size of the study area.	Use other public participation tools to increase advertisement of the web site.
Project Workshops/Open Houses	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Attendance.	3% - 5% of affected population (based on study area) in attendance.	Schedule at convenient times and accessible locations. Hold multiple workshops. Use other tools to increase awareness.
Small Group Meetings	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Met expectations of the group.	N/A. These meetings are held at the request of affected groups.	TPO staff and any consulting staff should be available in a timely manner to attend small group meetings regarding any TPO activity or issue. Meeting should provide information requested.

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Posters and Flyers	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw a poster or read a flyer.	Increase distribution to common areas where posters will be more visible to the general public and by partnering with community members & stakeholders.
Speakers Bureau	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Met expectations of the group.	N/A. These events are held at the request of affected groups.	TPO staff should be available in a timely manner to give presentations regarding any TPO activity or issue. The presentation should provide specific information requested.
E-Mail Announcements & Internet Message Board	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the announcement.	Increase e-mail list by advertising the availability of e-mail announcements using other public participation tools.
Fact Sheets	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Positive comments. Circulation throughout the TPO planning area, or project/study area.	Modify format and content based on comments received. Increase distribution by partnering with community stakeholders. Encourage reproduction & distribution.

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
TPO Logo	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.	Recognition of the logo.	The TPO logo should be used on all TPO products and publications, and on materials for all TPO sponsored activities.
Comment Forms	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of responses.	60% of meeting attendees filled out a form – OR- 2% of visitors to a web site submitted a form –OR- 20% of mail recipients return the form.	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving comments. Offer incentives for providing comments.
Surveys	Calls, letters, e-mails, etc.; Number of responses.	60% of contacted persons participate in the survey –OR- 20% of mail recipients return the survey.	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving feedback. Offer incentives for returning surveys.
Community Characteristics	Calls, letters, survey response forms.	Use of contact information to reach a minimum of 85% of persons that are affected by a project.	Increase or decrease distribution to more accurately target an area that may be affected. Make adjustments as needed to reflect changes in community characteristics.

Improvement Strategies

The Space Coast TPO should continually strive for improved public participation. Improvements should be made to increase public awareness and to improve the quantity and quality of information provided to the public. The decisions made by the TPO affect the entire population, both residents and visitors, of Brevard. Therefore, seeking public input on those decisions is vital to the success of the TPO as the agency responsible for transportation planning in Brevard.

**Space Coast TPO
Public Involvement Evaluation Form**

This form should be completed for each public involvement evaluation.

Evaluation of:	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning Study – please specify _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Tool(s) – please specify _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify _____
If this is a study evaluation, is this: <input type="checkbox"/> mid-study <input type="checkbox"/> end of study	
List the public involvement tools used during the study: 	
Description of Study or Tool: 	
Audience(s) Targeted for Public Involvement: 	
Type of Evaluation(s) to be conducted: <input type="checkbox"/> Qualitative <input type="checkbox"/> Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Statistical Analysis	
Survey, indicate type: <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-Face <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Written <input type="checkbox"/> Mail-back	
Targeted Respondents: 	
Statistical Analysis, description: 	
Date Evaluation Began: _____	Date Completed: _____
Completed By: _____	

**Space Coast TPO
Improvement Strategies Form**

Study or tool:

Date Evaluation Completed:

Improvement Strategies:

Date(s) of Implementation:

APPENDIX B

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Some commonly used transportation terms, acronyms and abbreviations:

AIS – Arterial Investment Study

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

AMPO – Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations

BPTAC - Bicycle Pedestrian & Trails Advisory Committee

CAC – Citizens Advisory Committee

CAP – Community Awareness Program

CIA – Community Impact Assessment

CMS – Congestion Management System

ETDM – Efficient Transportation Decision Making

FAC – Florida Administrative Code

FDOT – Florida Department of Transportation

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration

FS – Florida Statute

FTA – Federal Transit Administration

GIS – Geographic Information Systems

GMSC – Growth Management Subcommittee

INTERESTED PARTIES - Includes (but is not limited to): Groups and individuals who are affected by, or involved with, transportation in Brevard County (or in the region). Examples include: Federal, State and local government representatives, elected officials, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, the disabled, civic and social organizations, special interest groups, and representatives of neighborhood and homeowner associations.

ISTEA – Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991)

LRTP – Long Range Transportation Plan

MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization [may be used interchangeably with TPO]

MPOAC – Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council

PD&E – Project Development and Environment Study

PIP – Public Involvement Plan [may be used interchangeably with
Public Participation Plan (PPP)]

PPP – Public Participation Plan [may be used interchangeably with
Public Involvement Plan (PIP)]

PSAs – Public Service Announcements

SAFETEA-LU – Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation
Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

SCAT – Space Coast Area Transit

SCGTV – Space Coast Government Television

SOS – State of the System Report

TAC – Technical Advisory Committee

TIP – Transportation Improvement Program

TPO – Transportation Planning Organization [may be used interchangeably with MPO]

UPWP – Unified Planning Work Program

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