



envision
THE FUTURE OF TRANSIT IN TAMPA BAY *2030*

Regional Transit Development Plan
Public Involvement Plan

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Prepared for



Prepared by



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Section 1 Background

During the 2017 Florida Legislative session, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority underwent changes to its name, membership and planning requirements as part of Senate Bill (SB) 1672. SB 1672 refocused the agency as the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA), reduced its membership from seven to five counties to include Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Hernando, and Hillsborough, and modified its planning requirement from producing a 25-year long-range transportation master plan to a 10-year Regional Transit Development Plan (RTDP).

Involving and listening to the general public throughout the development of the TBARTA RTDP will ensure that the Tindale Oliver Team defines a plan that has community support and will effectively serve the residents and visitors of Tampa Bay and the rest of the region.

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is a strategic guide for the public involvement approach that will be used while developing the RTDP to inform the public about how they can be involved in the process to develop the RTDP. The following describes the potentially affected communities, stakeholders, and audiences, the general goals and guiding principles, and the means and methods that will be used to most effectively notify, engage, and ensure the involvement of the public and stakeholders throughout the plan's development. The PIP will be modified and updated throughout the process.

1.1 Project Description

As described in SB 1672, the TBARTA RTDP must provide a 10-year plan for regional transit projects in the five-county area that meets the requirements set forth in Chapter 14-73.001, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) and other relevant state and federal requirements. Upon completion, the RTDP will cover the 10-year planning horizon for Fiscal Years 2021–2030 and will be submitted for acceptance by Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Districts 1 and 7 prior to the September 1, 2020 deadline.

The RTDP is a strategic guide for TBARTA and partner agencies that represents the regional vision for transit in the five-county Tampa Bay region during the next 10 years.

Section 2 Outreach Goals and Guiding Principles

2.1 Public Involvement Plan Goals

Successful public engagement at a regional level requires four primary components:

- Instill awareness of the agency and awareness of the RTDP effort.
- Identify the appropriate outreach strategies, tactics, and innovations to target the diverse populations within Tampa Bay and achieve the greatest amount of participation.
- Execute those strategies through timely planning and successful logistics.
- Listen to the ideas provided and use them to discuss trade-offs and to define a plan that benefits the community.

2.2 Public Involvement Plan Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the PIP include the following:

- Involve the public in key aspects of the plan's development, such as through identification of major issues, preferences, and priorities.
- Provide a high level of exposure and range of opportunities for the public to offer input into the plan.
- Ensure that information is communicated in a clear, credible, concise, and consistent manner.
- Be responsive to messages received from the public and ensure that issues are explicitly responded to and considered.
- Provide a high level of coordination with other agencies and governments in the region.
- Make effective use of resources, such as capitalizing on existing communication channels within the community.
- Identify individual community and stakeholder groups, develop communication that is tailored to address the specific needs and priorities of each group, and do so by following the Governor's Plain Language Initiative.
- Make a special effort to inform and engage populations that, in the past, have been under-represented in the transportation decision-making process.
- Notify the public when key decisions will be made and provide sufficient opportunity for comment and response before decisions have been made.

Section 3 Stakeholders, Partners, and Audience

In a region that encompasses such a large and diverse area, a wide range of opinions and perspectives must be considered and respected when developing the RTDP. This is true of stakeholders and partners as well as the community. Working with and allowing agency partners, stakeholders, the Regional Workforce Board, and the public to provide comments throughout the effort is essential.

The stakeholders and organizations listed within this section does not reflect an inclusive list. This list will be modified and/or amended to allow for flexibility in the PIP in response to new audiences and issues as they emerge.

3.1 Local and Regional Stakeholders and Partners

The following lists the stakeholders and partners to be engaged during development of the plan through meetings, email blasts, or other strategies, as described in Section 4. Local and regional elected and appointed officials/policy-makers

- State legislators
- Counties
 - Hernando
 - Hillsborough
 - Manatee
 - Pasco
 - Pinellas
- Cities/towns
 - Anna Maria
 - Brandon
 - Brooksville
 - Dunedin
 - City of Clearwater
 - City of Bradenton
 - City of New Port Richey
 - City of Palmetto
 - City of Plant City
 - City of St. Petersburg
 - City of Tampa
 - City of Temple Terrace
 - Ellenton
 - Port Richey
 - Safety Harbor
 - Spring Hill
 - Tarpon Springs
 - Weeki Wachee
 - Wesley Chapel
- Local and regional transit and planning agency staff
 - Florida Department of Transportation Districts 1 and 7
 - Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
 - Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group
 - TBARTA MPOs Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC)
 - Local transit agencies
 - Hernando County Transit (TheBus)
 - Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART)
 - Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT)

- Pasco County Public Transportation (PCPT)
- Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
 - Forward Pinellas
 - Hernando/Citrus MPO
 - Hillsborough MPO
 - Pasco County MPO
 - Sarasota/Manatee MPO
 - Polk County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)

3.2 Business Organizations

The following lists the business organizations to be engaged during development of the plan. This is not an inclusive list.

- Associated Builders and Contractors
- Bay Area Apartment Association
- Bradenton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Bradenton Downtown Development Authority
- Building Owners & Managers Association (BOMA) Greater Tampa Bay
- Central Pinellas Chamber of Commerce
- Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR)
- Clearwater Regional Chamber
- Florida Gulfcoast Commercial Association of Realtors
- Gateway/Carillon
- Greater Hernando County Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Tampa Association of Realtors
- Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce
- Hernando County Tourist Development Council
- Manatee Chamber of Commerce
- National Association of Industrial & Office Properties (NAIOP) Tampa Bay
- New North Transportation Alliance (NNTA)
- Pasco Economic Development Council
- Plant City Economic Development Council
- Pinellas Realtor Organization
- Port Tampa Bay
- St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce
- St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport
- St. Petersburg College
- St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership
- St. Petersburg Economic Development
- Suncoast Workforce Board

- Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce
- Tampa Bay Partnership
- Tampa Downtown Partnership
- Tampa-Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation
- Tampa !p
- Tampa Bay Mobility Alliance
- Tampa International Airport
- University of South Florida (USF)
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Tampa Bay
- USF-St. Petersburg
- Visit Pasco
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater
- Visit Tampa Bay
- Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce
- West Pasco Chamber of Commerce
- Westshore Alliance
- Ybor City Chamber of Commerce

3.3 Professional Organizations

The following lists the professional organizations to be engaged during development of the plan. This is not an inclusive list.

- American Planning Association (APA) Sun Coast Chapter
- American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)
- American Society of Highway Engineers (ASHE)
- Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) Central Florida
- Hispanic Professional Women's Association Tampa
- National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) Tampa Chapter
- Tampa Bay Association of Environmental Professionals (TBAEP)
- Tampa Bay ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers)
- Tampa Bay Transportation Applications Group (TB-TAG)
- Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) Tampa Bay

3.4 Community

The following lists the community organizations and members of the public to be engaged during development of the plan.

- All for Transportation
- Neighborhood associations
- Service and community organizations
- Disadvantaged organizations (i.e., older adults, persons with disabilities, minorities, disenfranchised persons)

- AARP
- Lighthouse of Pinellas County
- Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind
- Lighthouse of Manasota
- Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind (Pasco County)
- Aging services for Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas counties
- Area Agency on Aging of Pasco–Pinellas
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Latino Coalition of Tampa Bay
- Barrio Latino Commission
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Tampa Bay
- InterCultural Advocacy Institute (Hispanic Outreach Center)
- Tampa Organization of Black Affairs
- Florida Diversity Council Tampa Bay
- Non-profit organizations
- Property owners
- Small and large business owners
- Professional organizations
- Transportation disadvantaged community
- Daily and community newspapers
- General public/interested citizens

Section 4 Public Involvement Plan Activities and Tools

Communicating and engaging the public across a five-county region can be challenging. The Tindale Oliver Team will conduct public outreach at each milestone associated with each project phase. Whereas we are prepared to conduct all types of public outreach, we plan to target wide audiences with broad outreach tools using a variety of strategies, from online methods to smaller group venues for in-depth conversations. The following are the most effective outreach activities that may be used.

4.1 Leveraging Existing Opportunities

Due to the size of the region, we will leverage existing partnerships to coordinate with other planned outreach efforts by partner agencies to increase the reach and understanding of what the community wants without creating more events that compete for the public's time. For example, the valuable information obtained during the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (RTFP) and MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) updates, as well as the region's existing Transit Development Plans (TDPs), can augment the information collected over the development of this RTDP.

4.2 Anticipated Outreach Activities

4.2.1 Project Branding/Templates

The team will create a unified project "look" to provide a cohesive image and make the project easily-recognizable in the public.

4.2.2 Project Information Online

Information regarding the update will be posted on the existing TBARTA website so the general public and agency staff can retrieve, review, and comment on plan information and materials. It will be continually updated throughout development of the RTDP. Information will include all plan documents and maps, including draft documents for public review for each phase of the process; electronic surveys; upcoming and past public outreach events; presentations; and public outreach materials, including flyers and brochures.

4.2.3 Social Media

The use of social media can be an effective and inexpensive tool to encourage participation in the online surveys and provide updates on the plan's process. The team will work with TBARTA and the agency's partners in the region to create and distribute messages to share on their social media networks.

4.2.4 Email List

Members of the public and stakeholders who wish to receive information, updates, and special announcements regarding the plan may request to be added to the email list via the website or at a presentation or engagement event. The opportunity to join TBARTA's general email list and to receive updates about the commuter services program will also be offered.

4.2.5 Email Blasts

Email blasts will be produced and distributed periodically to maintain interest in the plan and to inform the public and stakeholders about the planning process, public outreach opportunities, and other useful information.

4.2.6 Informational Materials/Flyers

Informational materials will be produced periodically to communicate plan development updates, upcoming public engagement opportunities, plan-related milestones and results, or other information related to the RTDP and will be available online and handed out at relevant meetings and presentations. Consistent with the most recently adopted TBARTA Title VI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, project materials to engage participation will be produced in English and Spanish, with written translation of project deliverables to be provided in Spanish and in other languages upon request. Spanish is the most prevalent language among the LEP population, and speakers are the largest representative likely to come into contact with transit services in the five-county TBARTA service area.

4.2.7 Online Surveys

Surveys will be administered at key points during the effort to understand community preferences, travel behavior, attitudes of current riders, and opinions of non-riders during development of the mission, goals, and objectives of the RTDP. They may be specially designed with an interactive interface or as simple as a question-and-answer online survey. Paper copies of the surveys will be provided at outreach events and meetings and integrated with online results. Surveys will include the option to switch language to Spanish and others, if identified. Results from the surveys conducted as part of this effort will be augmented with the results of recent onboard and other surveys in the region.

4.2.8 Interactive Survey (MetroQuest)

MetroQuest is an interactive online tool that provides a simple yet entertaining way for members of the public to review project information in an easy-to-follow format, identify elements that are most important, and witness how different planning decisions impact outcomes. The results are easily quantifiable and helpful when evaluating different scenarios or strategies. A MetroQuest platform specific to the RTDP will be prepared during later phases of the plan's development to solicit feedback on potential regional transit network scenarios and project priorities. The platform will include the option to switch language to Spanish and others, if identified.

4.2.9 Technical Advisory Group

To ensure that the project proceeds in adherence with regional objectives and needs, a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will review the technical analysis used in developing the RTDP and provide comments on all major deliverables. Five TAG meetings will be held at key milestones during the effort. The TAG will primarily be composed of 11 members, including a representative from each of the five transit agencies and four Workforce Boards within the five-county region and FDOT Districts 1 and 7. The MPOs in the region may be consulted through this group as well.

4.2.10 Presentations to Agency Boards and Committees

The team will make presentations to the TBARTA Board and TBARTA Committees at key milestones during the effort. Presentations will be made that give a general update of the project, work completed to date, results of the technical analysis, anticipated tasks in the coming months, and upcoming public engagement opportunities (as appropriate) or a summary of past public engagement completed.

Presentations will be made to partner agency boards and committees to allow the agency staff and/or consultant team to give updates on the effort and answer questions about the RTDP. Partner agencies may include local transit agencies, local MPOs, County Commissions, City Councils, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, or other agencies interested in learning about and being part of the process.

4.2.11 Public Meetings

Public workshops and meetings provide the public with an opportunity to be a vital part of the planning process from the start. At the meeting, attendees can speak directly to project and agency staff, review materials, and provide comments, allowing for an open dialogue with agency and project staff. One round of in-person meetings (five meetings total, one in each county) will be held early in the plan's development to solicit input on initial priorities.

As specified in the most recently adopted TBARTA Title VI and LEP Plan, the Census Bureau's "I Speak Cards" will be provided at workshop and/or meeting sign-in tables to identify language needs other than Spanish for future meetings. Although the team may not be able to provide translation assistance at a meeting, the cards can be an excellent tool to identify language needs for future meetings and responding to comments in languages other than English and Spanish.

4.2.12 Speakers Bureau Presentations

Presentations to community groups will bring the information where people are already meeting to reduce the potential for meeting fatigue while garnering valuable input from people that might not otherwise be engaged in the planning process. The team will make presentations at up to 10 meetings around the region during key milestones to communicate information about the effort.

4.2.13 One-on-One Meetings with State Elected Officials

One-on-one meetings will provide state elected officials an opportunity to ask poignant questions about Envision 2030 and to learn more about community concerns over regional transit as collected through the RTDP outreach process. TBARTA staff will identify with whom and when these informational meetings are needed.

4.3 Comment Database

A comment database will be created and continually maintained to track all comments received during the effort. The information collected will include the comment, date received, format/source (e.g., email, at meeting, from website, etc.), responses given (if applicable), and follow-up conducted (if applicable). Commenters will be asked to provide their zip code. Following entry of the comment, staff will review the comments for favorable, unfavorable, or neutral; and categorize the comments.