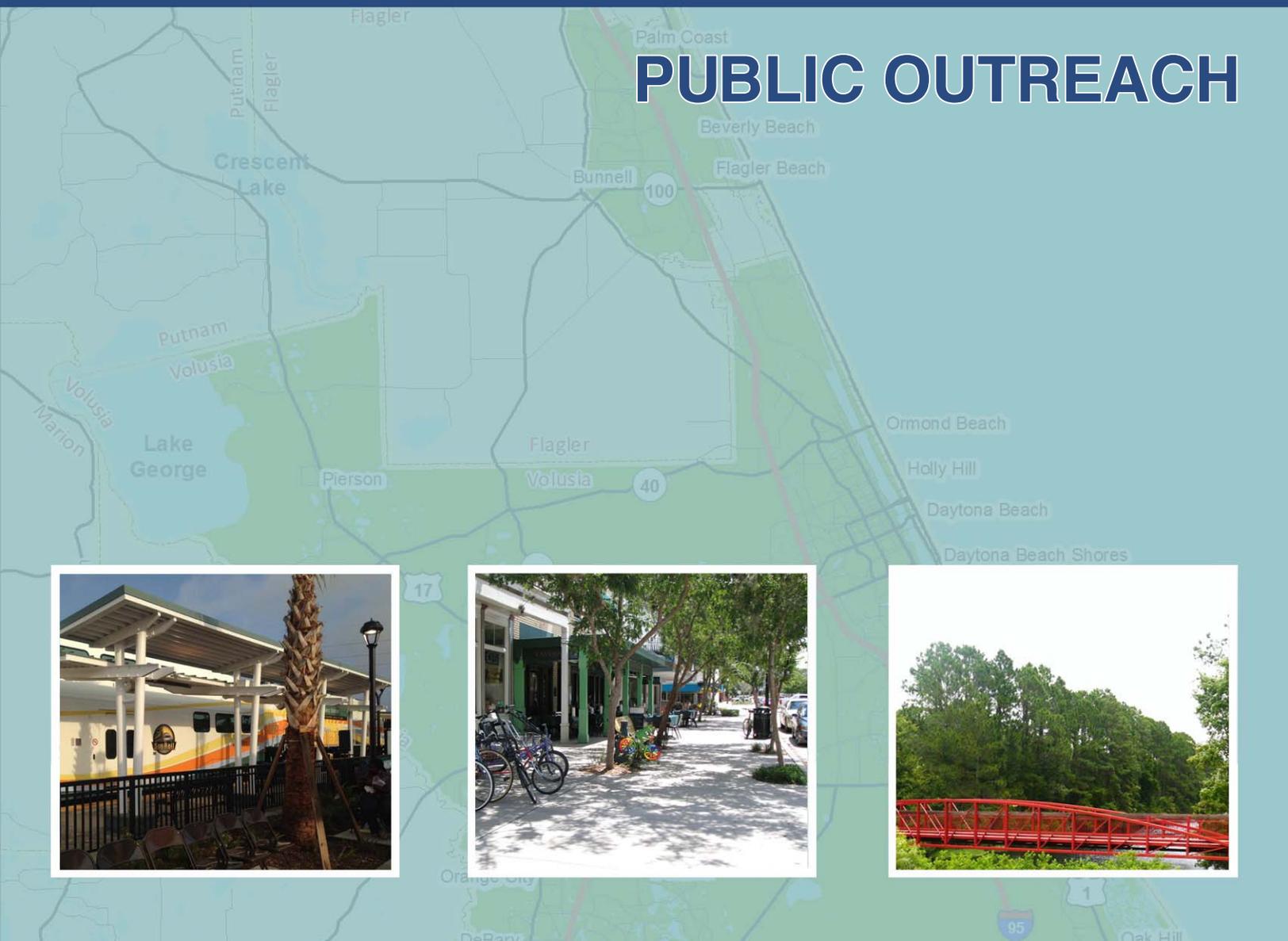




# Chapter 5



## PUBLIC OUTREACH



### 5. PUBLIC OUTREACH

#### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of public outreach as a means to inform, educate, and involve citizens in the transportation decision-making processes that impact their daily lives cannot be underestimated. The River to Sea TPO planning area includes a diverse population of almost 600,000 residents and the outreach program included efforts to reach and involve representatives from all walks of the community. With five institutions of higher education, there is an engaged and youthful population as well as a significant number of senior citizens and an active group of disabled advocates that seek to maintain independence for persons with disabilities. The TPO planning area covers rural communities and urbanized areas and includes an employment base consisting of agriculture, tourism and manufacturing.

During the development of the 2040 LRTP, a multi-level public involvement strategy was utilized to enhance public involvement in the decision-making process and maximize public input. This participation started at the beginning of the LRTP process when the plan goals were developed and continued through the end as needs were assessed and the cost feasible plan developed. This focus on engaging the public allowed for ample opportunities for input on the planning solutions being considered.

#### 5.2. OUTREACH METHODS

A Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed early in the LRTP process to outline the protocols and activities to be undertaken. The PIP is included in Technical Appendix E.

The PIP outlines the strategies to involve the general public in the development of the 2040 LRTP, including outreach and involvement of traditionally under-represented populations. In addition, the involvement of community stakeholders, agency representatives, planners, engineers, and other knowledgeable professionals in both the private and public sectors, ensured that input was obtained, key issues identified, and solutions generated, with the ultimate goal of achieving community consensus for the adopted LRTP.

Public outreach efforts included a need to both educate and solicit input from various members of the public. Throughout the development of the plan, public comments were solicited and utilized to further inform the LRTP subcommittee, land use working group, TPO standing committees and Board. Since these efforts targeted people with various levels of education, interest, background, goals and desires, socioeconomic status and available time, multiple public involvement outreach tools were utilized. Diverse representation helped to ensure that each aspect of the plan was developed with regard for a broad cross-section of the community. These efforts are further detailed in the following sections.

##### 5.2.1. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Website

The Internet is a major forum for the dissemination and exchange of information. The advantages of creating a project website are plentiful: it is relatively inexpensive to set up and maintain; it is simple to keep the information current; it can be entertaining to use; it can be accessed at any time; it provides an opportunity for people to offer input as well as become informed and stay involved throughout the development process.

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The primary limitation of a project website is that the internet serves only those with access to it. This means that groups with lower utilization rates such as the elderly or low income may be less likely to access the planning process using this resource.

A website domain name, [www.R2CMobility2040.org](http://www.R2CMobility2040.org), was chosen by the LRTP Subcommittee. Information on scheduled and planned activities was provided to the public through this website, including the “Make Your Mark” sessions; the dates, times, and locations of the LRTP Subcommittee and Land Use Working Group meetings; and the dates and times of the public hearings. Project documents were also posted for public access.

### 5.2.2. Make Your Mark in 2040 Interactive Planning Sessions

*Make Your Mark in 2040* was an interactive planning activity that reinforced the concepts of long range planning, limited financial resources, compromising and building consensus. Preparation for the game involved limited education about transportation funding, project costs, transportation networks and planning strategies and impacted populations.

The *Make Your Mark in 2040* exercise offered several advantages over more traditional public involvement. First, participants made a conscious decision as to which types of transportation are most important to receive funding. Second, each participant in the game experienced the constraints of budgeting as they began to realize there are more needs than available funding. Third, participants were confronted with the reality of dealing with population growth and land use development. Fourth, there were no specific skills, education or experience needed for participants to convey their opinions about transportation options and planning in their community. The small groupings and interactive nature of the exercise also encouraged and empowered individuals to have a voice and offer ideas and opinions that would not typically occur in a traditional public forum. The activity also produced outcomes that served as an influential driver of the plan’s direction and project development.

Challenges associated with the activity included the required time commitment which may not appeal to some people; significant personnel resources required; and the limited number of participants that can be accommodated in each event.

Participants were gathered into groups of six to eight members and provided with a map of their county and a limited amount of funding for projects. The group must select projects that can be built with the available funding. The Make Your Mark activity required participants to reach consensus regarding transportation projects and enlightened them on funding decisions that elected officials are faced with every budget cycle. Make Your Mark acts to break down social and economic barriers and encourages cooperation and collaboration among its participants.

The TPO completed nine *Make Your Mark in 2040* planning sessions and the results were compiled and used in the development of the 2040 LRTP. A summary listing of the planning sessions is shown in Table 19. There was participation by over 170 individuals.

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**Table 19 – Make Your Mark Participation Summary**

Location	Participants	Tables	Tables Passing Sales Tax	Date	Location
Daytona Beach	17	3	3	2/17/15	Conklin Center for the Blind
Orange City	18	4	3	2/23/15	Lecture Hall - University High School
New Smyrna Beach	19	3	2	2/25/15	Brannon Center
DeLand	34	5	5	2/26/15	Sanborn Center
Deltona	31	4	3	2/27/15	Daytona State College - Deltona Campus
Daytona Beach	5	1	1	3/2/15	Graduate Seminar Room – Bethune-Cookman University
Ormond Beach	3	1	1	3/2/15	Ormond Beach Senior Center
Palm Coast	32	5	5	3/3/15	Hilton Garden Inn
South Daytona	13	3	3	3/11/15	Votran's Mobility Management Center
<b>Totals</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>		

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### 5.2.3. One-on-One Stakeholder Meetings

Representatives for the River to Sea TPO held meetings with local area government officials and business leaders to discuss their future transportation needs and the 2040 LRTP. Ten such meetings occurred in March and April 2015.

### 5.2.4. Civic Presentations

Representatives for the River to Sea TPO attended meetings at eight civic organizations in Volusia and Flagler Counties to deliver a presentation on the 2040 LRTP and to encourage participation in the process. Overall, nearly 500 persons were part of this outreach. These meetings occurred in February, March and April 2015.

### 5.2.5. LRTP Workshops

Two public workshops were held for the benefit of TPO advisory committee members and the TPO Board. The focus of these meetings was to review the purpose and approach for developing the LRTP and to provide input on various policy decisions that impact development of the plan.

### 5.2.6. Tell the TPO Survey

The *Tell the TPO* survey was an independent work effort, completed in advance of the LRTP, to ascertain the transportation wants, needs, problems, preferences and suggestions from residents, business community, elected officials and other stakeholders. The survey was available as a hard copy and online, in both English and Spanish versions. The results were used to inform the LRTP work effort. There were 1,263 responses. Almost a third expressed interest in learning more about transportation issues by opting into one or more of the contact lists maintained by the TPO and partner agencies.

### 5.2.7. River to Sea TPO Board and Committee Coordination

A significant amount of public notice, representation and review for the development of the 2040 LRTP occurred as part of the regular meetings of the River to Sea TPO Board, standing committees and the LRTP Subcommittee. These groups include citizen representatives, elected officials, local government staff and special interest advocates representing all portions of the planning area. In addition, public notice is provided for each of the meetings in accordance with Florida Statutes and the adopted by laws of the organization.

In addition to the River to Sea TPO Board, committee input included the following:

- Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)
- Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
- Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB)
- LRTP-Specific Committees (Oversight Committee, LRTP Subcommittee, Land Use Working Group)

In particular, the CAC and BPAC are specifically intended to be mechanisms for public involvement in the TPO. More than 50 presentations on the long range plan were provided over the course of the project.

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### 5.2.8. Public Meetings

Three public meetings were held throughout the MPA to present information and gather input from the public.

- July 22, 2015 at Daytona State College in Daytona Beach, FL with 32 attendees
- July 23, 2015 at the Sanborn Center in DeLand, FL with 25 attendees
- July 27, 2015 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Palm Coast, FL with 25 attendees

The public meeting information was posted on the LRTP website and on the River to Sea TPO's Facebook page. The Facebook posting reached 128 people.

The meetings were also advertised in the Daytona Beach News-Journal and the Palm Coast Tribune. The Flagler County Chamber of Commerce and the DeLand Area Chamber of Commerce both posted information about the public meetings to their websites.

In addition, a public hearing was held as part of the River to Sea TPO Board meeting on Tuesday, September 23, 2015. At this meeting, the TPO Board voted to adopt the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

### 5.2.9. Miscellaneous

The Executive Director of the River to Sea TPO was a guest on 93.5 FM/1150 AM WNDB on July 23, 2015 to discuss the public meetings and the LRTP as well as on the Big John radio show.

In addition, there were a number of newspaper articles, discussing the long range plan, Make Your Mark sessions, and other public involvement opportunities.

The River to Sea TPO also maintains a Facebook page, to which LRTP updates were posted.