Executive Summary

Federal Law requires the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to jointly certify the transportation planning processes of Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years (a TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the US Census, with a population over 200,000). A certification review generally consists of four primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning documents (in advance of the site visit), the development and issuance of a FHWA/FTA certification report and a certification review closeout presentation to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) governing board.

The Federal Review Team conducted a site visit review of the Jacksonville TMA on May 10-12, 2016. Transportation planning for the Jacksonville TMA is conducted by the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO). Since the last certification review in 2012, this TMA has made significant improvements to its transportation planning processes.

The certification review is one of several methods used to assess the quality of the local metropolitan cooperative, continuing and comprehensive planning process. This certification review was conducted to highlight best practices, identify opportunities for improvements, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. The Federal Review Team identified nine (9) noteworthy practices and seven (7) recommendations. There were no corrective actions.

Based on the overall results of the certification review, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the Jacksonville TMA substantially meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. This certification will remain in effect until September 2020.
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Section I. Overview of the Certification Process

Under provisions of 23 CFR 450.334 (a) and 49 CFR 613.334 (a), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the planning process of Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) “not less often than once every four years.” This four-year cycle runs from the date of issuance of the previous joint certification report.

The primary purpose of a certification review is to formalize the continuing oversight and evaluation of the planning process. The FHWA and the FTA work cooperatively with the TMA planning staff on a regular basis. By reviewing and approving planning products, providing technical assistance, and promoting best practices, the formal assessment involved in a certification review provides an external view of the TMA’s transportation planning process. The certification review also helps ensure that the major issues facing a metropolitan area are being addressed.

A certification review generally consists of four primary activities. The activities include: a “desk audit”, which is a review of the TMA’s planning documents (e.g. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); a “site visit” with staff from the TMA’s various transportation planning partners (e.g. the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), local/regional transit service provider, and other participating State/local agencies), including opportunities for local elected officials and the general public to provide comments on the TMA planning process; the preparation of a “Federal Certification Review” report that documents the findings of the certification review; and a formal presentation of the findings at a future TPO Policy Board meeting.

The review for the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO) was held on May 10-12, 2016. During the site visit, the Federal Review Team met with the staff of the NFTPO, FDOT, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) transit staff, elected officials, committee representatives, and the public. See Appendix A for a list of review team members and site visit participants and Appendix B for the TMA Certification Meeting agenda. The public meeting for this certification review was held on Wednesday, May 11, 2016. The purpose of the public meeting was to inform the public of the Federal transportation planning requirements and allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the transportation planning process. For those that could not attend the public meeting or who did not want to speak during the public meeting, contact information for the Federal Review Team was provided. Members of the public were given 30 days from the date of the public meeting to mail, fax or email their comments and/or request a copy of the certification review report. No additional comments were received during the 30-day comment period.

A copy of the notice for the public meeting can be found in Appendix C. Minutes from the public meeting, including a listing of those in attendance and a summary of the public comments is provided in Appendix D.
Section II. Previous Certification Findings Status/Update

The following is a summary of the recommendations made by the Federal Review Team to the NFTPO during the previous certification review. The previous certification report was published in September 2012. There were no corrective actions.

A. Recommendations

1. Title VI and Bike/Ped: The Federal Review Team is concerned that the strong approach to having an engaged Bike/Ped Planning Committee may not be sufficiently inclusive of the disabled community. A focus on bicycling, though excellent, is not the entirety of the North Florida TPO’s responsibility. The Federal Review Team reminds the TPO that many members of its public are pedestrians by necessity and that they may not be able to bicycle or have access to them. Therefore, the Federal Review Team recommends that the TPO consider adding a member of a disability service group or organization to its Bike/Ped Planning Group to ensure that accessibility is a strong consideration in the Group’s activities. Moreover, the Federal Review Team recommends that North Florida TPO review each of its planning products and other programs to ensure that representation of the disabled community is continuous, extensive and well documented. Where representation cannot be achieved through boards or committees, the TPO should provide targeted outreach to these communities and develop relationships with the groups or organizations that serve them.

Update: Immediately after the 2012 Certification, staff invited a representative from Career Source of Northeast Florida to participate on the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). This member works specifically with disabled clients. Additionally, TPO staff engaged an existing committee, the Duval County Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board, for this purpose. Generally, this community has limited ability to travel and is not willing to commit to another TPO committee. The TPO has included the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB) and Northeast Florida Mobility Coalition in TPO planning activities. All bicycle and pedestrian plans are brought to them for comment. Other TPO work products are brought to them as needed and as their meeting agendas permit. Membership of the TDCB includes persons with disabilities and agency staff who work with persons with disabilities throughout the region.

The Northeast Florida Mobility Coalition is an informal entity composed of representatives of agencies providing transit services in a six-county region (Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties). This group is being formalized and membership is being expanded to include elderly and disabled citizens. TPO staff is participating in this ongoing effort.

Representatives of the disabled community were also engaged in developing the LRTP.
2. **Linking Planning and Environment:** The Federal Review Team recommends North Florida TPO include a short description of each regionally significant project in their 2040 LRTP update that demonstrates the general or overall purpose and need to each project in the text of the plan.

**Update:** Path Forward 2040, the long range transportation plan adopted in November 2014, includes purpose and need statements for every project in the 2040 Needs Plan. Projects are categorized by funding source. Regionally significant projects are on the Strategic Intermodal System and programmed by the TPO with federal funds, along with local and non-regionally significant projects. Project descriptions, evaluations and rankings are provided for all projects and are available on the TPO website. These purpose and need statements were developed in consultation with state and regional agencies, transit agencies and local governments.

3. **Long Range Transportation Plan:** The Federal Review Team recommends that projects in the first 10 years of the upcoming 2040 LRTP include the source of funding for each project including the breakout of federal, state, local and private funds.

**Update:** The TPO followed the Financial Guidelines for MPO 2040 Long Range Transportation Plans developed by the Florida Department of Transportation and approved by the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization January 24, 2013. These guidelines have been reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration and were discussed at the joint FDOT/FHWA webinar January 15, 2013. The source of funding is provided for all projects in the adopted 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

4. **Long Range Transportation Plan:** The Federal Review Team recommends that the 2040 LRTP show the amounts of funding being expended on operations and maintenance for state and local systems. Averages of past years' expenditures or system averages will be sufficient to address this recommendation.

**Update:** Operating and maintenance costs were provided by state, local and transit partners for all projects in the 2040 Needs Plan and Cost Feasible Plan.

5. **Transportation Improvement Program:** The Federal Review Team recommends North Florida TPO continue their efforts to include and refine total project costs in their TIP. The TPO had completed a large effort prior to the Federal Team’s site visit which placed into the TIP the total project costs for each project. Since the site visit, this approach to total project cost has been refined by the FDOT and the TPO should use the new information and methods made available by the FDOT in their future TIPs.

**Update:** The TPO has used the information provided by FDOT to provide total project cost as recommended. This includes a total of project cost for years prior
Section III. Organization of TPO (23 CFR 450.310, 312, 314)

A. Description of Planning Area

The North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is located in Northeast Florida. The planning area boundary includes all of Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns Counties and the cities of Jacksonville and St. Augustine, both of which are census defined urbanized areas. The planning area is bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean and is divided by the St. Johns River. The TPO planning area boundary is presented in the following image:

During the global economic recession in 2008-09 growth throughout the area slowed. However, with the economic recovery, new residential development is occurring throughout the area, especially in St. Johns County.
B. Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure

The North Florida TPO represents the citizens of Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns Counties, Florida, and its policy board is representative of the region. The voting membership of the Policy Board is composed of 10 elected officials and representatives of five local independent transportation authorities. Baker and Putnam Counties and the United States Navy are non-voting members and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 2 Secretary is an advisor. Representatives of the TPO Policy Board include:

- Mayor or designee, City of Jacksonville
- Three members, Jacksonville City Council
- Mayor, Atlantic Beach, Jacksonville Beach or Neptune Beach
- Mayor or designee, City of St. Augustine
- Two Clay County Commission members
- One Nassau County Commission member
- One St. Johns County Commission member (also Transit agency St. Augustine)
- Jacksonville Aviation Authority
- Jacksonville Port Authority
- Jacksonville Transportation Authority (Transit, Jacksonville)
- Nassau County Ocean Highway and Port Authority
- St. Augustine-St. Johns County Airport Authority

All members have one vote, with the exception of the representatives of the City of Jacksonville (Mayor and three City Council Members), who have double-weighted votes. TCC and CAC members have one vote each.

Staffing at NFTPO continues to be stable with dedicated, long-term knowledgeable employees. The nine (9) North Florida TPO staff members have extensive experience in transportation planning, programming, finance and communications.

C. Agreements

The MPO’s agreements satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 450.314 and are current.

Section IV. Scope of the Planning Process (23 CFR 450.306)

A. Transportation Planning Factors

23 CFR 450.306 requires that the metropolitan transportation planning process explicitly consider and analyze a number of specific planning factors that reflect sound planning principles. The North Florida TPO addresses the required planning factors throughout the planning process and in the development of transportation planning products such as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)
and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The planning factors are incorporated into the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the LRTP and tasks in the UPWP.

B. Air Quality

The NFTPO is currently designated as an attainment area for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Staff is monitoring air quality readings within their geographic area as well as the regulatory actions of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The TPO is making a substantial contribution to congestion management and air quality by providing regional green energy incentives and resources. Following the philosophy of its business partner, JAX Alliance that, “business recognizes the transportation future but it takes government to facilitate it,” the TPO is encouraging the growth of alternative fuels from an economic, commercial standpoint rather than one of environmental stewardship. The TPO used Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding to offset the costs of converting county and other fleet vehicles to green fuels. The initiative was so successful that the TPO has been able to leverage resources to expand green energy to other transportation industries, including sanitation trucking, railroad freight and even a Florida logistics firm that expanded its business into Georgia due to the ability to refuel green vehicles in Jacksonville. The benefits to air quality remain to be seen but are likely to be significant.

Noteworthy Practice: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice related to Air Quality. For more details about this noteworthy practice, please see Section XII.

C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Activities

The North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO) examines pedestrian and bicycle facilities as an integral aspect of infrastructure project development. The TPO has a designated Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Group (BPPG) that serves as technical staff which consists of four County liaisons in collaboration with a representative from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The BPPG's primary focus is to continue to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the region. The TPO and its four counties established a rotational system whereby one of the four counties is allocated all of the designated funds for their respective county's Bicycle and Pedestrian projects on an annual basis.

Each county determines a List of Priority Projects (LOPP) for Pedestrian and Bicycle projects that should be addressed with the allocated funds. This methodology is advantageous to the counties since their respective projects can be initiated when a county is designated from the rotational system. Initially, the TPO utilized the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to fund pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects. Now, the TPO utilizes the Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) program to assist in
selecting and funding projects. Typically, BPPG and the TPO prioritize multi-use projects that are within a range of two-miles from schools.

The TPO has maintained an all-inclusive participation process for everything related to bicycle and pedestrian planning. Citizens have the opportunity to participate with the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) or the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board to provide input, submit issues, or any concerns about bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. An initiative that the TPO pursued is creating a regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. In 2013, the TPO hired a consultant to survey the region in determining which pedestrian and bicycle corridors should be improved. Initially, the TPO anticipated an estimated 400+ survey responses but received over 2,000 from all over the region. Also, the TPO and consultant launched a latent demand study using demographics and public involvement to assist with their analysis. The results of the surveys and the latent demand study assisted the TPO in identifying specific focus areas to further enhance pedestrian and bicycle corridors.

**D. Transit**

Transit service in the Jacksonville UZA is primarily provided by the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA), an independent authority with responsibility for transit and transportation projects in the region. JTA provides fixed route bus transit service on approximately 35 fixed routes. JTA operates approximately 180 buses and 9 smaller community transit shuttles, as well as para transit vehicles; the Skyway people mover and a downtown trolley service. JTA recently completed a Route Optimization plan and has redone numerous bus routes to improve travel times. JTA is also working to add five Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes for approximately 55 miles of premium bus service in mixed traffic with FTA 5309 Small Starts program funding. Traffic signal priority and several park-n-ride lots are planned. JTA recently received a discretionary grant award for the St. John’s River Ferry and is replacing slip walls there. JTA will take over the St. Johns Ferry operations for the next 20 years. JTA also received an award as the “Outstanding Public Transportation System” from American Public Transportation Association (APTA) in May 2016.

The SkyWay aerial guideway spans the St. Johns River and connects a number of downtown area and buildings. The SkyWay is now fare-free as of 2015. JTA reports 1.3M in annual ridership on the SkyWay; doubling in the past several years. JTA provides about 13.5 million transit trips per annum and reports its weekday ridership is stable with approximately 44,300 riders per day (2015). JTA is planning a multi-modal regional transportation center (JRTC) in downtown Jacksonville with 5311 funds. The JRTC may eventually receive Greyhound, MegaBus, taxi and community vanpool services (and possibly AMTRAK and commuter rail service in the future).

JTA reports an annual budget of approximately $94M with operating funds plus $25M of capital funds or approximately $120M annually. Other funds include FTA 5307 and 5339 funds which provide capital dollars for preventive maintenance and various eligible items. JTA also uses formula Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom
funds for eligible populations subject to recent MAP-21 and FAST Act changes to these programs. Funding from the state comes in the form of Block Grants and St. Johns County also receives Federal funding. Both JTA and St. Johns County benefit from some planning funds through the MPO and the UPWP, and both JTA and St. Johns County are the recipients of state funding.

In addition, St. Johns County contracts with the St Johns County Council on Aging (COA) to provide deviated fixed route and para transit service (Sunshine Transit). St. Johns County has seven deviated fixed routes and provides service for anyone within ¾ mile of the route. One of the St. Johns County routes connects into the JTA system (at Avenues Mall). St. Johns County reports ridership is growing. This service receives funding from many sources including state funding and coordination contracts.

JTA appears to have a good working relationship with FDOT and the NFTPO. The support of the voters of the area for extending the Better Jacksonville Plan (BJP) is a major reason for JTA stability. The BJP allows the levy of a special purpose local option sales tax for transportation improvements. The BJP sales tax was recently extended until 2030. JTA also benefits from some local option gas taxes.

JTA recently installed a compressed natural gas (CNG) refueling station with private vendor participation and JTA has recently begun replacing diesel buses with CNG buses. JTA plans to convert 100 buses to CNG in several years. JTA reportedly receives about $1M in Surface Transportation Program (STP) flex funds from the MPO annually and St. Johns County receives about $250,000 per annum.

The issues/challenges facing JTA include completing five planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines and the long-awaited downtown multimodal center for commuter rail, intercity bus, local transit route and van pool coordination; SkyWay technology issues and future funding support for SkyWay operations; the need for more ADA accessible transit shelters and sidewalks along bus routes.

In summary, coordination among JTA, NFTPO, FDOT, St. Johns County and the Council on Aging (COA) is apparent. Transit agency representatives clearly participate in regional transportation planning and updates. JTA has a Transit Development Plan with regular update cycles. As part of the on-going LRTP updates and TIP work, the NFTPO consults with JTA staff who prepare transit capital plans and alternatives and develop a regional needs plan. JTA participates in the committee structure of the NFTPO. The TPO also reports on obligated transit projects and has a detailed transit financial plan in its LRTP.

**Noteworthy Practice:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice related to Transit. For more details about this noteworthy practice, please see Section XII.
E. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The North Florida TPO last updated the ITS Master Plan in July 2010. This regional plan is an update to a plan first created in 2007 when the TPO in coordination with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority, FDOT and other members of the First Coast ITS Coalition developed a plan to establish the region’s vision and goals for intelligent transportation systems. This plan and the regional ITS architecture guide the TPO ITS investments which total approximately $1 million annually. The TPO is planning to update this master plan in 2017. According to staff the Smart Region Master Plan will address emerging technologies that present unique opportunities to manage traffic, reduce congestion and enhance safety within the region. Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) strategies currently being considered include adaptive signal control, dynamic detouring and enhanced traveler information systems to assist travelers in making better choices.

All ITS investments are made under the umbrella of the ITS Coalition. The ITS Coalition includes traffic engineers, law enforcement, incident responders, and technology and telecommunications companies from Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties. Projects are identified by the coalition, the TPO provides funding, FDOT purchases the equipment and the local governments install and maintain it which according to staff has worked well for the past 15 years.

During the site visit, the TPO staff provided a detailed presentation to summarize their efforts related to ITS. Below is a visual representation of their most recently implemented technologies. During the site visit, the Federal Review Team was also able to participate in a tour of the recently constructed Regional Transportation Management Center. The TPO funded construction of the regional transportation management center opened in November 2015. All TPO ITS investments are coordinated through this center which is home to the FDOT, Florida Highway Patrol, Road Rangers (dispatch), Florida Fish and Wildlife, City of Jacksonville Traffic Engineering and the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office.
Noteworthy Practice: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice related to Intelligent Transportation Systems. For more details about this noteworthy practice, please see Section XII.

F. Freight Planning

In December 2012 the TPO updated their Freight Plan by adopting the North Florida Freight Logistics and Intermodal Framework Plan. The plan is detailed in two phases, focusing on the region’s most critical and immediate freight, logistics and intermodal opportunities and challenges. Details provided in the freight plan were used in the TPO's incorporation of Freight into the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

According to discussion held during the certification review site visit, the North Florida TPO has had much success getting the freight industry to participate in transportation planning. The increased participation is the result of two adjustments made by TPO staff. First, instead of a traditional freight committee housed within the TPO, the TPO utilizes its participation in the Logistics Advisory Group (LAG), housed within the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, to serve as the TPO's freight advisory committee. Second, TPO staff has participated in specialized outreach, whereby they go to the freight industry instead of having the freight industry come to them. According to staff, familiarity with the region and a working relationship with key players in the freight community have enabled the TPO to identify specific needs of the freight community and address them.

North Florida is a freight hub with two ports, three major railroads and hundreds of freight related industries. TPO partners include: JAXPORT (Jacksonville Port Authority), Nassau County Ocean Highway and Port Authority, Jacksonville Aviation Authority, CSX Transportation, Florida East Coast Railroad and Norfolk Southern Railroad. The TPO recently completed a Truck Study for the City of St. Augustine addressing truck deliveries in the historic downtown and a Truck Circulation Study for the Port of Fernandina. A study to designate a Freight Logistics Zone for North Florida is ongoing.

Most recently the TPO has embarked on a new program entitled Jaxport Clean Truck Program. This voluntary pilot program is being conducted by the TPO in conjunction with the Jacksonville Port Authority. The purpose of this program is to promote cleaner trucks for cleaner operations at Jaxport Terminals. The North Florida TPO has set aside funding which will be awarded to eligible truck owner-operators or trucking companies to upgrade their truck or engine.

Noteworthy Practice: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice related to Freight Planning. For more details about this noteworthy practice, please see Section XII.
G. Security Considerations in the Planning Process

The TPO’s most recently updated Continuation of Operations Plan (COOP) was tested March 2016. The testing of the COOP was prompted in part by the staff’s relocation to a new facility. This new facility has been designed to withstand a Category 3 Hurricane and has emergency generators capable of functioning for a full week of operation. As a result, TPO staff can remain in place in the case of a natural disaster. Following the testing of the COOP, language was added to the plan to notify the Regional Transportation Management Center of an event/evacuation.

According to staff, security was an explicit goal in the 2035 LRTP, but was not one for the 2040 update because suitable performance measures could not be identified. However, the TPO staff took the same approach used in the 2035 update of coordinating with local security agencies and the military for input in developing the current 2040 plan. The TPO staff also views the construction of the North Florida Regional Transportation Management Center as an effort to secure the system. This center brings together FDOT, Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Fish and Wildlife, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office with input from Homeland Security.

H. Safety Considerations in the Planning Process

The TPO adopted a Regional Strategic Safety Plan in December 2012 that is used to guide the planning process, including development of the LRTP, TIP and all bicycle and pedestrian planning initiatives. The Regional Strategic Safety Plan identifies priority locations (corridors and intersections) that were determined to be of the most significant concern for the safety of drivers and vulnerable road users (bicyclists and pedestrians). Enhancing safety is an explicit goal of the TPO’s planning process and is included as Goal 3 of the 2040 LRTP, which aligns with the national goal of investing in projects that enhance safety and lead to reduced crashes and lower crash severity. The 2040 LRTP incorporates the Strategic Safety Plan adopted by the North Florida TPO and the adopted 2012 FDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The plan provides emphasis on projects and strategies that mirror the emphasis areas of the SHSP and identifies needs associated with safety priorities.

The TPO has thoughtfully launched targeted safety campaigns based on problems identified in TPO plans. For example, CareMore Argyle was undertaken to reduce aggressive driving in the Argyle Forest area, a problem that was identified in a traffic study for the area. The Argyle area of southwest Duval County is a traffic crash hotspot, averaging 500 crashes per year within seven square miles. The CareMore Driving Argyle campaign conducted in summer 2012 began with law enforcement interviews and focus groups to better define the causes and key communication points. The post-campaign analysis showed that crashes were reduced by 19 percent (vs. the 10 percent goal), with no fatalities, bicycle or pedestrian incidents. The Public Service Announcement (PSA) was nominated for an Emmy. Another example is the TPO’s Yield to Life Campaign which helped highlight issues in the City of St. Augustine. During the
site visit, the Federal Review Team viewed both, the CareMore and Yield to Life videos, which are available online and available through the TPO’s website.

Free bicycle safety training was provided for the public at City Hall and the Home Again St. Johns One-Stop Center for homeless citizens. St. Augustine police officers conducted outreach at high traffic intersections in the Historic District, distributing brochures, T-shirts and bike lights. Flagler College communications students took on the campaign as a class project, conducting outreach on campus and at community events, and shared their experiences via social media. Bicycle and pedestrian-involved crashes decreased by 25 percent during the Fall 2014 campaign as compared to the same time in 2013. For the six months following the campaign (November 2014- April 2015), bicycle and pedestrian-involved crashes were down 23 percent from the same timeframe in 2013-14 and 41 percent from 2012-13.

**Noteworthy Practice:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice related to Safety Considerations. For more details about this noteworthy practice, please see Section XII.

**Section V. Unified Planning Work Program (23 CFR 450.308)**

The North Florida TPO had an approved UPWP in place during the certification review, and the draft FY16/17-17/18 UPWP was under development and review. The UPWP is developed with the assistance of all TPO advisory committees. All expenditures are monitored on a monthly basis by the TPO Chief Financial Officer. Monthly invoices are submitted to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 2 for reimbursement on all grants. The FDOT requires all invoices to include all backup documentation to substantiate reimbursement including timesheet records, indirect cost allocation detail, and copies of payment vouchers. The Unified Planning Work Program includes public transit agency projects funded with FTA funds from the TPO passed through to the transit agencies as well as planning tasks undertaken by these agencies funded with FTA 5307 funds.

**Section VI. Interested Parties (23 CFR 450.316)**

**A. Outreach and Public Participation**

North Florida TPO has an extensive and multi-tiered public involvement program that makes it easy to forget that this is one of the smaller staffs among Florida planning organizations. The TPO website is newly revamped, and serves as the primary repository of information about the TPO and its products. Unlike some MPOs that assume electronic access is prevalent among stakeholders, North Florida TPO actually has supporting data. In updating the website, the TPO studied site analytics, conducted a survey and solicited feedback from the public and both traditional and nontraditional partners. The TPO learned that a vast majority of its region was accessing transportation information via the web. Further, it appeared that minorities were more likely to visit the website via handheld device rather than through meetings or traditional
media. The research further indicated that TPO customers wanted a website that was simple and easy to find with efficient navigation buttons. The public also wanted mobile technology options with increased use of fact sheets rather than just links to planning documents. Moreover, the TPO concluded that social media was an important, if costly investment in that different demographic groups had distinct preferences. For example, the TPO discovered that Facebook was more popular among nonminority, middle-aged groups, while black users of all income levels were likely to use Twitter or Instagram. The TPO found millennial preferences changing too rapidly for reliable data, suggesting to the TPO that it will need to collect metrics in the coming year to help guide social media and other outreach decisions.

In addition to the website and social media, the TPO uses a number of methods for public involvement, all of which were verified during the site visit. Examples include surveys, project webpages, e-newsletters, traditional media, sponsored public events, and engaging videos accessible on the website and in other public forms, such as movie theaters. The TPO also uses an extensive outreach list of social service, faith based, business alliances and similar organizations that serve minority and other vulnerable communities, which is guided by the TPO community characteristics inventory. Another TPO public involvement strategy is to leverage stakeholder relationships to increase dissemination of information. For example, the TPO regularly serves as a guest on a daily National Public Radio (NPR) local broadcast about community issues. The show is very popular and the TPO has garnered excellent public input, not only for planning products, but also community needs and TPO branding and name recognition.

The Review Team found that the TPO’s Public Participation Plan (PPP) is largely an accurate reflection of the program as it is implemented, and that essential elements described in 23 CFR 450.316 are both incorporated and described in plain, easily comprehensible language. The TPO solves the concerns over presenting complicated legal jargon by moving more detailed sections to the PPP appendices. The body of the PPP describes planning products, including the process for amendments and timeframe for public comments. In addition, Board and committee meeting times are listed, as well as the notice procedure for emergency or unplanned meetings. Furthermore, the document solicits public participation on committees and in programs, including listing contact information for the Public Involvement Coordinator at the bottom of each page. The Public Involvement webpage serves as an effective preface to the document, giving the public a very brief overview of why its input is critical, and providing methods for involvement along with nondiscrimination information, community characteristics data and a link to the FHWA publication on the planning process.

The TPO evaluates the performance of its PPP using a standard activity template and has additional evaluation criteria for each of its public involvement strategies, including the website. However, it is unclear to what extent these measures help to inform or drive the TPO’s public involvement decisions. Base on the review, it appears that the TPO regularly assess public involvement effectiveness through intuition or the experience of long-tenured staff who know what activities are best and how or modifications are needed. The Federal Review Team agrees that this practice has been
working for the TPO, as its public involvement process is vibrant, diverse and far-reaching. However, as a long term strategy, it may be vulnerable to staff change and less visible to the public.

**Noteworthy Practice and Recommendations:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice and identifies two recommendations related to Outreach and Public Participation. For more details about these findings, please see Section XII.

**B. Tribal Coordination**

There are no federally recognized tribes located in this area that require formal coordination with the TPO.

**C. Title VI and Related Requirements**

NFTPO has a Title VI and Nondiscrimination Plan that was updated this year, as well as a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan that uses the latest available census information to analyze the region’s language needs. The TPO Title VI Assurance was signed in 2015 and nondiscrimination materials are easy to locate on the TPO website through the public involvement or contact us pages. Staff responsible for the nondiscrimination program remains the same as in the past two certification reviews. Furthermore, the Title VI Coordinator reports directly to the TPO Executive Director, and other executive leadership is active in nondiscrimination programming, seeking out annual training events around the state, and nationally sharing TPO activities. The TPO has aligned its program plan updates to the triennial cycle requested by FTA and FHWA, and its documents appear current through 2019.

The TPO reports little change in demographic representation as the region grows. There was a slight increase in Hispanics, though not among those who are LEP. The TPO does translate its nondiscrimination materials into Spanish, but as yet has not determined a need for broader translation of essential documents. This holds true for the Asian demographic as well, as the region experienced growth among Filipinos, though it appears negligible and anecdotally connected with the military presence in the region. The TPO regularly reviews the demographics and applies the four factor analysis to ensure that it can provide meaningful access when or if the need arises. The TPO employs a native Spanish speaker who is competent to provide both verbal and written language assistance, and is fluent in terms specific to transportation. As this staff member is the liaison to the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB) and is also responsible for Bike Ped planning, she is in a unique position to identify LEP needs among more vulnerable members of the community.

The TPO has a community characteristics inventory that it uses for LRTP updates and other programs. It expresses satisfaction over minority and disadvantaged representation on its board and on the various committees. In fact, the TPO believes the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) has achieved parity for race, ethnicity, gender and disability. Age of members and those involved in TPO activities, however,
continues to trend higher than representative. Protected class demographics are included in many, if not all TPO plans and activities, though the extent to which the TPO documents data analyses in choosing projects or determining equity may be somewhat inconsistent.

Consistent with its results-driven approach to all of its program and services, the TPO has set four distinct and measurable goals for nondiscrimination, under a broader commitment to eradicating inequity in transportation decision making. The goals remain unchanged from year to year, the TPO valuing the focus they bring to particular areas of concern. For example, the TPO pledged to establish a relationship with the area’s only Historically Black College and University (HBCU), Edward Waters College (EWC). Repeated attempts to include the College, as well as various activities organized to assist the students and staff, produced negligible results. Staff turnover at the school over the past four years made it difficult to achieve the TPO’s goal. Nevertheless, the TPO sees value in establishing an ongoing relationship with EWC and thus maintains it as a long term goal of the Title VI Program Plan.

The TPO provides a solid list of activities undertaken since the last certification that support environmental justice (EJ) and Nondiscrimination. One notable example is the work the TPO is facilitating through partnership with its Freight and Logistics Group. Though reducing dangerous, loud and congested rail corridors was not the driving motivation of the TPO’s Corridor Future Rail Study, the alternatives identified would increase safety in urbanized corridors, reduce traffic congestion and remove the associated noise, all in areas that are frequently high minority. Moreover, the study connects economic center and multimodal centers in a manner that will support existing employment and future job growth.

Finally, the TPO has enhanced its efforts to ensure active participation by individuals with disabilities and the organizations that serve them. It charged the TDCB with reviewing bike/pedestrian plans and activities to ensure that mobility impairments are not lost or marginalized among more vocal, bike-focused advocacy. While this may seem an easy task, not all planning organizations have been successful at integrating their local coordinating boards with alternative aspects of planning. Other examples of inclusion and consideration are the TPO’s partnerships with the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, as well as Career Source Northeast Florida, which provides employment support for those with disabilities.

**Noteworthy Practice and Recommendations:** The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice and identifies five recommendations related to Title VI and Related Requirements. For more details about these findings, please see **Section XII**.

**Section VII. Linking Planning and NEPA (23 CFR 450.318)**

Since the previous certification review, NFTPO has included purpose and need statements for all projects in the 2040 LRTP update Needs Plan. The TPO worked closely with state and local agencies/governments in developing the purpose and needs
statements for the projects in the LRTP. Environmental mitigation strategies are discussed in the 2040 LRTP, along with an estimate of mitigation costs, environmental considerations and a detailed discussion on the FDOT Mitigation Plan that includes information on the St. Johns River Water Management District Environmental Resource Permits.

Environmental review is primarily through FDOT’s Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process (ETDM) process in which all pertinent resource agencies participate, such as Florida Fish and Wildlife, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard and the St. Johns Water Management District. The State Historic Preservation Officer also participates. In addition to all permitting/resource agencies that participate in the ETDM process, the TPO Board and committees, with local and public participants, provide invaluable assistance in identifying and considering mitigation and environmental activities.

Section VIII. Long Range Transportation Plan (23 CFR 450.322)

The NFTPO provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate how each planning factor is being considered in the 2040 LRTP, adopted November 2014. The goals and objectives of the LRTP are consistent with local comprehensive plans, the Regional Councils Policy Plan and the Federal planning requirements.

The North Florida TPO works closely with FDOT District 2 to insure that the LRTP, TIP and freight plans incorporate the priorities of the Strategic Intermodal Highway System (SIS), Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS), and other modal plans including the Freight Mobility and Trade Plan. The FDOT 5-Year Work Program, SIS Cost Feasible Plan, SIS Needs Plan are utilized in developing the plan. The entire SIS Cost Feasible Plan has been incorporated in the Path Forward 2040 Cost Feasible Plan. The TPO also works closely with the modal agencies (transit, aviation and port) to insure consistency with their plans and programs.

To engage young people in development of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, the North Florida TPO adopted the Future Cities model Future City Competition. Students at nine area schools were invited to participate in this completion. They were required to complete an essay, build a model of their future city out of recycle materials and construct a SimCity model of their city of the future. The North Florida TPO sponsored the winning middle school team for competition in the Florida Future Cities Competition in Tampa.

Noteworthy Practice: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice related to the Long Range Transportation Plan. For more details about this noteworthy practice, please see Section XII.
A. Travel Demand Modeling/Data

The North Florida TPO updated its travel demand model from a four-step model to an activity-based model, and continues to maintain a full-time modeler on-staff. The model advancement was accomplished during the 2040 LRTP update.

The planning assumptions used in the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan were validated in the calibration and validation of the TPO’s travel demand model, Northeast Florida Regional Transportation Model-Activity Based (NERPM-AB). Supporting documentation that described the process was presented to the Review Team prior to the certification site visit. The primary data sources were the 2010 National Highway Transportation Survey Add On, the American Community Survey and Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP). Local data include traffic counts and transit passenger boarding, property appraiser parcel data from Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties, public and private school enrollment data from each county, hotel/motel data, employment data from Info USA and ES-202 employment data. NFTPO plans to request a FHWA Peer Review of the NERPM-AB in FY2017.

Noteworthy Practice: The Federal Review Team recognizes one noteworthy practice related to Travel Demand Modeling/Data. For more details about this noteworthy practice, please see Section XII.

B. Financial Plan/Fiscal Constraint

For each update of the LRTP, the Florida Department of Transportation provides an estimate of federal and state revenue available over the life of the plan, as well as an estimate of administrative, operations and maintenance costs over the life of the plan to be included as an appendix to the Financial Resources document. The forecast includes revenue for Duval County’s recently extended second local option tax (LOGT). This extension was approved with a specific list of projects; these projects are included in the 2040 Cost Feasible Plan.

With no gas or sales tax referendums anticipated, the NFTPO has more than $27 billion in needs and $7 billion forecasted revenue in today’s dollars over the life of the plan. In future year dollars, the planning area has $46 billion in needs and $14.8 billion in revenue. Fiscal constraint is demonstrated annually using cost estimates sources and methods.

Section IX. Congestion Management Process (CMP) (23 CFR 450.320)

North Florida TPO’s Congestion Management Process (CMP) consists of both careful monitoring and practical applications for a safer, more efficient and cleaner transportation future. This is particularly important in that 2016 represents the region’s highest vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rates since 2009, of which the largest increase has been on highways. Similarly, truck miles traveled have finally returned to pre-recession levels. While there was no significant change in reliability, average speeds are lower...
due to congestion as is the overall quality of the system. The TPO recognizes that multimodal investments are helping to address congestion. For example, since the last certification, transit ridership has increased to record numbers as communities enjoy better access to transit options. Notably, 46% of Duval County residents have a bus stop within a quarter mile of their homes.

Other TPO initiatives are also having a measurable impact on congestion. Thanks to six years of TPO support and growth of Blue Toad technology, along with state investments in incident management, crash response times are at 3.7 minutes compared to 8 minutes in 2011. Moreover, Blue Toad, a geospatial location system based on cell phone signature data, is rapidly expanding to use in the freight industry, something that will have enormous impact on congestion management by providing truck routes, locations and departures/arrival times. Another TPO investment, the traffic management center, resulted in the integration of the area’s first responders and system monitors, enhancing multi-agency communication and allowing for collection of real-time, quality data to better assess system performance. Finally, the TPO has also achieved modest but hopefully sustainable results with its Cool Pool commuter services program. Not surprisingly the program is of little interest to the average commuter driver, but large employers view the program as a cost effective worker benefit as well as a means of reducing parking issues. Aetna, Mayo Clinic, Baptist Health, Deutsche Bank and CSX are some of the regional employers that are taking advantage of the TPO’s customized Cool Pool service and its efficient, high quality ride matching software.

The CMP was used in developing the LRTP and is also considered in the programming of ITS/TSM&O investments. Performance metrics adopted in the CMP were utilized in the LRTP and are reported annually in an Annual Mobility Report.

Section X. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (23 CFR 450.324, 326, 328, 330, 332)

The North Florida TPO ensures that the TIP includes all proposed federally and non-federally funded regionally significant transportation projects, including intermodal facilities by requesting the Tentative Work Program from FDOT, which is downloaded into the TIP software by Data Transfer Solutions. The total project cost is included for all projects in the TIP. TPO staff also sends out a request for projects to each of the partnering agencies, counties and authorities. These partners include the Jacksonville Aviation Authority, Jacksonville Port Authority, Jacksonville Transportation Authority, City of Jacksonville, Clay County, Nassau County, and St. Johns County.

Each County and Authority has direct access to the TIP database and can directly enter their projects into the database, including intermodal facilities.

The TIP is fiscally constrained by year. Additionally, the TPO adopts an annual List of Priority Projects to submit to FDOT District 2 to consider in developing the new fifth year of the Five-Year Work Program. Projects in this list are from the adopted LRTP for
which an extensive project prioritization was performed. Though the list is reviewed and adopted annually, it does not change significantly from year to year. The NFTPO states that consistency with the LRTP is a high priority in developing the List of Priority Projects, which includes bicycle, pedestrian and transit needs.

Section XI. Regional Coordination

The North Florida TPO is an independent regional metropolitan planning organization with representation from four voting counties (Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns), two non-voting counties (Baker and Putnam), two cities and five local authorities. The MPO works closely with its member agencies and the Florida Department of Transportation-District 2 to deliver projects, programs and studies. The TPO has also partnered with the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce, local electric utilities, local railroads and the Jacksonville Business Journal.

Since the last certification review, the MPO has been able to leverage its resources and expand its partnering efforts. For example, the MPO has:

- Expanded the membership of the TPO Policy Board (2004 Boundary and Apportionment Plan) to include Baker, Flagler and Putnam counties as non-voting members.
- Supported creation of the Northeast Florida Regional Transportation Commission (NFRTC), a six county (Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns County) entity created in State statute to develop new funding for transportation initiatives in North Florida. The offices of the NFRTC are located at the TPO. Using state funds, the Path Forward 2040 Needs Plan was expanded to include Baker and Putnam Counties. This plan was the genesis of the regional transportation plan.
- Expanded its Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Agency to include Baker and Putnam Counties. The TPO Policy Board, with Baker and Putnam Counties, vote as the TRIP Agency, annually prioritizing projects for TRIP funding. Projects have been funded in all six counties. The Path Forward 2040 Needs Plan also serves as the regional TRIP plan.
- Formalized their relationship with Baker and Putnam counties with two inter-local agreements among the member entities.

The MPO also participates in discussions with the adjacent counties and regions (e.g. Atlanta metropolitan region, Flagler County, and Putnam County) in an effort to establish a regional forum for collaboration during different types of initiatives.

Section XII. Findings/Conclusions

The following items represent a compilation of the findings that are included in this 2016 Federal Certification Review report. These findings, which are identified as noteworthy practices, corrective actions and recommendations, are intended to not only ensure continuing regulatory compliance of the NFTPO’s transportation planning process with
Federal planning requirements, but to also foster high-quality planning practices and improve the transportation planning program within the Jacksonville TMA. **Corrective Actions** reflect required actions for compliance with the Federal Planning Regulations and must be completed within the timeframes noted. **Recommendations** reflect national trends and best practices, and are intended to provide assistance to the NFTPO to improve the planning process. **Noteworthy Practices** highlight efforts that demonstrate innovative ideas for implementing the planning requirements.

At the conclusion of the Federal Review site visit, the Federal Review Team asked the NFTPO staff if they had any training or technical assistance needs. The NFTPO identified technical assistance requests for topical areas including the new Federal Planning Rule and Expectations. FHWA and FTA will work with the NFTPO to provide resources in these areas.

**A. Noteworthy Practices**

1. **Air Quality**: The Federal Review Team congratulates the TPO for being the driving force behind the U.S. Department of Energy’s (USDOE) Clean City designation for the region. This is the only MPO sponsored Clean Cities Program in Florida. The TPO achieved this honor through its many innovative and cooperative efforts regarding positive environmental stewardship.

2. **Transit**: The Federal Review Team commends JTA’s Route Optimization effort; willingness to operate the St. John’s River Ferry and provide capital improvements to keep the Ferry open; the SkyWay technology assessment (and fare-free operation which has doubled ridership since 2014); continuing development of five BRT routes interaction with St. Johns County COA, the NFTPO and the well-respected Sunshine transit service; and plans for improved pedestrian access to bus stops and stations.

3. **Intelligent Transportation Systems**: The Federal Review Team commends the TPO for its efforts related to Intelligent Transportation Systems. In addition to the recently constructed Regional Transportation Management Center, the TPO funded the installation of wind speed monitors on 22 local bridges. The signals from the devices are transmitted to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite and back to the North Florida Regional Transportation Management Center and shared with local law enforcement and emergency management personnel during weather events. The TPO has also expanded their Blue Toad program which includes devices that can monitor in real time travel time reliability and origin and destination estimations.

4. **Freight Planning**: The Federal Review Team recognizes the TPO for its efforts to engage the Freight Community. By participating in direct outreach to freight providers, the TPO staff has managed to engage this community in the transportation planning process. This engagement has led to the sharing of data that was once hard to acquire from this community.
5. **Safety Considerations:** The Federal Review Team commends the TPO for its efforts related to safety. The TPO has identified high crash locations and developed specialized and targeted campaigns to combat the safety issues present. For example the TPO created a “Yield to Life-Slow Your Roll” Campaign; a collaborative effort between the TPO and the City of St. Augustine that targeted St. Augustine residents and students through a website, video, television public service announcements, Flagler College radio, hyper screen messages at key venues, utility bill inserts, brochures, posters and T-shirts.

6. **Outreach and Public Participation:** The Federal Review Team is impressed with the quality and content of the TPO’s various public service videos, as well as factors examined to target videos to key audiences. One example is the CareMore video broadly distributed in areas where the crash statistics showed that middle class, working parents were more likely to be involved in crashes during pm drive times. Consequently, the video depicts a white female in her 30’s who, as she drives home, has several near misses with speeding, distracted or aggressive drivers. As she nears home, the driver herself engages in a moment of phone use, just as she approaches an oblivious child playing in the drive, presumably her daughter. The video does not show a grisly, tragic accident, but subtly communicates a strong message that we are all both victims and perpetrators when behind the wheel. The PSA video was nominated for an Emmy Award to which the TPO attributes understanding the demographics, crash data and community values before undertaking a particular outreach strategy.

7. **Title VI and Related Requirements:** The Federal Review Team recognizes the TPO for its ongoing commitment to national civil rights initiatives. TPO Staff are regular attendees and participants at the FDOT/FHWA annual forum for minority schools and frequent volunteers for nationwide efforts to improve Title VI and EJ analysis. Recently, the TPO assisted FHWA with development of a fact sheet on equity considerations in climate change and emergency management. FHWA also enlisted the TPO in testing various EJ data tools and sites. The TPO’s cooperative spirit helps advance nondiscrimination nationally and highlights Florida as a state committed to equity and inclusion.

8. **Long Range Transportation Plan:** The Federal Review Team commends the North Florida TPO for their efforts to engage youth in the development of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. The Future Cities model, Future City Competition, afforded area middle school students an opportunity to actively participate in the transportation planning process.

9. **Travel Demand Modeling/Data:** The Federal Review Team commends the North Florida TPO for its use of emerging technology to advance travel demand modeling within the region. The NFTPO updated its travel demand model from a four-step model to an activity-based mode, simulating the daily travel patterns of every member of every household.
B. Corrective Actions

No Corrective Actions were identified.

C. Recommendations

1. **Outreach and Public Participation**: North Florida TPO continues to expand the use of data in informing its transportation decision in all programs and activities. However, despite the measures of effectiveness described in the PPP, NFTPO continues to rely on intuition or past experience when choosing or modifying public involvement activities. The Review Team encourages the TPO to review and enhance its public involvement measures to ensure their usefulness. The periodic review of performance measurement is necessary; therefore, the TPO should explore options, modify or even discard particular measures based on the usefulness, clarity, data or available resources. It is important to note that the measures serve to document the effectiveness of the TPO’s process, as well as serve as a reliable and transparent report-card for the PPP.

2. **Outreach and Public Participation**: The TPO website went live on or about May 6, 2016, only days before the Federal Certification. As such, there were a few noted instances of missing information and broken links, though some were not TPO sponsored (see the Jacksonville Bike Ped Master Plan Study, Steering Committee links). The Review Team understands that it may take time to perfect the product, and only recommends that the TPO carefully check each page to ensure accuracy, functionality and completeness.

3. **Title VI and Related Requirements**: The TPO is interested in attracting a younger demographic to transportation planning committees, both to better represent the area population but also to ensure that the unique opinions of younger and future users are not lost among those of older participants. One possibility the TPO might consider is adding a CAC and/or BPAC seat specifically for a student representative of the area’s many colleges or universities. Though students come and go, they are a consistent presence and heavy users of the region’s transportation systems. They are also frequently involved in crash incidents, and have differing opinions on the value of transit and multimodal options. The unreliability of college student participation can be addressed by requiring a member of the school’s student council rather than from the general student body, or arrange an unpaid internship or externship credit for the student chosen to participate. In any event, the TPO should maintain the right to replace any student participant for lack of attendance.

4. **Title VI and Related Requirements**: North Florida TPO has traditionally used Jacksonville Transit Authority (JTA) to procure its professional services consultants. The TPO is considering discontinuing this practice. The Federal Review Team urges the TPO to reconsider. JTA is a seasoned federal-aid recipient that has experience in procuring a wide range of services on various
federal funds. FHWA funds can only participate in the FDOT-approved DBE program, and that local contracting preferences are currently not permitted in Florida. Further, JTA commits substantial resources to locating and supporting DBEs and other small businesses, benefiting the TPO and other regional partners.

5. **Title VI and Related Requirements:** The Review Team acknowledges the TPO’s good work in using data as part of its civil rights responsibilities and for assisting FHWA with national efforts to compile resources for Environmental Justice analysis. The Review Team recommends that the TPO strive for consistency in documenting protected class data collection and analysis in all plans, studies and services. For example, while North Florida TPO uses protected class demographic data in developing its LRTP, it is largely related to targeting public involvement and collecting the various needs of the communities it serves. These are important considerations, but the TPO must also be able to use data to determine equity in the distribution of benefits and burdens, and to identify when adverse impacts may require avoidance, minimization or mitigation. The Review Team appreciates that the availability of data is quickly outpacing the ability to synthesize it. There are new tools for data analysis available through US DOT and US EPA for this activity.

6. **Title VI and Related Requirements:** North Florida TPO has taken a lead role in encouraging the use of alternative fuels, one of the efforts which led to receiving a Clean Cities designation from USDOE. One of the TPO’s many initiatives included funding installation of twenty-five charging stations for electronic vehicles. Some of these ‘charge well’ stations are located on local government owned or controlled properties, while others are available for public use at commercial properties. As the TPO is relatively new to providing transportation facilities within the meaning of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, the Review Team recommends that it inspect each station to ensure accessibility and effect remediation for those, if any that do not meet the 2010 Standards for State and Local Government Facilities Title II or 2010 Standards for Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities Title III. Sections 308 and 309 may be particularly helpful in assessing reach ranges and operable parts.

7. **Title VI and Related Requirements:** The Federal Review Team encourages North Florida TPO to continue initiatives designed to identify, assess and prioritize projects that provide accessibility along pedestrian rights of way. More specific guidance on ADA/504 requirements for planning agencies from FHWA should be available soon. In the meantime, the Review Team further suggests that the TPO coordinate with its local governments in demonstrating compliance with ADA/504, which includes not only sharing data and other pedestrian facility information, but also identifying partners in need of training or assistance, and reporting to FDOT or FHWA innovative programs or cost effective tools that might assist public agencies with meeting accessibility requirements.
Based on the overall findings, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the Jacksonville TMA substantially meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. This certification will remain in effect until September 2020.
APPENDIX A – Site Visit Participants

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Shundreka R. Givan, AICP
Shakira Crandol
Carey Shepherd
Michael Sherman
Lina Maldonado

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Keith Melton*

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Karen Taulbee
Scott Clem
Theodis Perry
Peter Vega
Josh Reichert

North Florida TPO
Jeff Sheffield
Denise Bunnewith
Wanda Forrest
Marci Larson
Milton Locklear

Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA)
Carl Weckenmann

MPOAC
Carl Mikyska

Other Participants
Terry Shaw
Rob Palmer
Craig Carnes
David Kaufman
Allan Mosely

*Participated via teleconference on May 10, 2016
# APPENDIX B – TMA Certification Meeting Agenda

North Florida Transportation Planning Organization  
TMA Certification Review Site Visit  
980 North Jefferson Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32209  

## AGENDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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| 8:30 AM    | Welcome / Introductions  
> Purpose of the Certification Process  
> Review schedule and close-out process | Federal Team  
*Lead: Shundreka Givan* |
| 8:45 AM    | Discussion of Previous Review Findings  
> Federal TMA Certification  
> State/TPO Annual | Federal Team, TPO, FDOT  
*Lead: Shundreka Givan* |
| 9:00 AM    | Best Practices, Planning Priorities and Lessons Learned | TPO                      |
| 10:00 AM   | TPO Overview (including changes since the last TMA Certification)  
> Demographics  
> Boundaries  
> Political  
> TPO Structure  
> Process Changes  
> Agreements/Contracts | Federal Team, TPO, FDOT  
*Lead: Shundreka Givan* |

### Break (30 Minutes) – RTMC Tour

| 11:00 AM   | TPO Plans:  
> Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)  
> Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)  
> Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) | Federal Team, TPO, FDOT  
*Leads: Shundreka Givan* |
| 11:45 AM   | Environment/Air Quality | Federal Team, TPO, FDOT  
*Lead: Shundreka Givan* |

### Break for Lunch

| 1:30 PM    | Transit | Federal Team, TPO, FDOT  
*Lead: Keith Melton* |
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Title VI</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Carey Shepherd</td>
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<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Public Involvement</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shakira Crandol</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Michael Sherman</td>
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**Wednesday**

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<tr>
<td>8:30 AM</td>
<td>Day One Recap</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shundreka Givan</td>
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<td>8:45 AM</td>
<td>Congestion Management Process</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shundreka Givan</td>
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<td>9:15 AM</td>
<td>Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shakira Crandol</td>
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<td>9:45 AM</td>
<td>Freight</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shakira Crandol</td>
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<td>Break (15 Minutes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>Regional Coordination</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Lina Maldonado</td>
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<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shakira Crandol</td>
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<td>Break for Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shakira Crandol</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Requests for Technical Assistance and Training</td>
<td>TPO</td>
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<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Public Meeting</td>
<td>Federal Team</td>
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**Thursday**

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<tr>
<td>8:30 AM</td>
<td>Day Two Recap</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT Lead: Shundreka Givan</td>
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<td>Break for Preliminary Findings, Discussion with Federal Team</td>
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<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>TPO Board Meeting</td>
<td>TPO</td>
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<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Closeout Discussion</td>
<td>Federal Team, TPO, FDOT</td>
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<td>Conclude Site Visit (12:00 PM)</td>
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APPENDIX C – Notice of Public Meeting

Notice of Public Meeting
Federal Certification of the North Florida TPO

Wednesday, May 11 from 4-5:30 p.m.
North Florida TPO, 980 N. Jefferson Street

Federal law and regulation require that the metropolitan transportation planning process for the transportation management area must be certified at least every four years as they address major transportation issues. Copies of the certification documents are available to review by visiting our website or calling us during regular business hours.

All meetings are held at 980 North Jefferson St., unless otherwise noted. Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Marci Larson at (904) 306-7513 or e-mail at marci@northfloridatpo.com at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. The TPO meeting agenda is available on the website.
APPENDIX D – Summary of Public Meeting Minutes and Public Comments

The FHWA and FTA would like to thank everyone who provided comments during the public comment period for the NFTPO Federal Certification Review. These public comments are an important element of the certification review, as they allow citizens to provide direct input on the transportation planning process for the transportation planning area. The comments received during the public meeting were complimentary, with the most common themes relaying a message of cooperation and coordination on the behalf of the North Florida TPO staff. No additional public comments were received during the 30-day comment period. The public meeting minutes are presented below.

FEDERAL CERTIFICATION PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
TMA Federal Certification Public Meeting - May 11, 2016

Agency attendees included the following:
Shundreka Givan, FHWA, Lead
Shakira Crandol
Michael Sherman
Lina Maldonado
Carey Shepherd
Jeff Sheffield, North Florida TPO
Denise Bunnewith, North Florida TPO
Marci Larson, North Florida TPO
Scott Clem, FDOT District 2 Planning Liaison
Karen Taulbee, FDOT District 2 Planning Manager

Ms. Givan opened the public meeting at 4 p.m. and gave a brief overview of the certification process. She then asked for public comments from the attendees.

George Gabel, maritime attorney with Holland & Knight Law Firm, gave remarks. He leads the Logistics Advisory Group for Northeast Florida which is made up of logistics companies locally. It includes the military, especially the Marine Corps, and all types of businesses in the logistics field in Jacksonville. He stated, “In the course of our work, we have developed a regional logistics plan which was encouraged by and funded (in part) by the TPO. There was also funding from the Jax Regional Chamber of Commerce and the City of Jacksonville. We wanted to see what we needed to do to reach our goal of being America’s logistics center. We felt we could self-brand because of the class 1 railroads, interstate highways, seaports, airport, distribution centers, and the university logistics program. We see being a logistics center as a main opportunity for this city and we are totally supported by the TPO and would not exist without the TPO. Jeff (Sheffield, executive director) says we are his advisory group and we are glad to serve that purpose. We now have an intermodal container transfer facility, dredging authorized by Congress, rail expansion, natural gas – all efforts supported and led by the TPO to keep this area a center for green options. I represent a company that has converted two ships to work on LNG. TPO is first in all the country to do that. Jacksonville will now be a center for LNG and Jeff is a leader in converting fleets of all kind to CNG. It’s exciting to see the different things that are happening and as a community it gives much credit to the TPO. I’m sure that this organization is the top in the country; we certainly support it as a community and are proud of them.
Adele Griffin, District Director, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio, said. “I wish all agencies kept us as informed as this TPO for events, issues, requests. When we need assistance, they are right there.”

Jackie Smith, District Director, US Representative Ander Crenshaw, commented, “George said it best. The TPO is the heart of what is going on in the transportation world....You branch out and see it like roads, rivers, bridges. But the network has one center. It’s here and they keep us abreast of what is going on. Even our neighboring counties like Baker come to the meetings even though they aren’t official members. But they are at the table every month and their input is listened to just like Duval County. I think that everyone feels that you get a fair chance from the different counties. We also represent Nassau and they also feel very much represented here, because of the way the TPO is run. When the new road to the national cemetery came up they called me and said this is coming up Working together we were able to add it as number 20 on the list of priority projects. You are always aware of what is going on and I appreciate it because there are so many moving parts and you have to stay aware.”

Brad Thoburn, Vice President of Planning & Development, Jacksonville Transportation Authority. Brad mentioned that JTA has done a lot work in revamping the transit system and a lot of work has been done with the TPO. Two authorizations ago the transit needed to be involved in the planning process. In Jacksonville, it was not an issue because we are and have always been in lock step with the TPO. Jeff (Sheffield, TPO executive director) helps with funding for planning initiatives for 5303 and 04 funds in the area. Plus regionally, we work with Nassau and Clay Counties and it is a truly collaborative effort. Freight is a close partnership with FDOT and the partners locally. And JTA is converting 100 of our buses over the next few years to natural gas. We worked with the TPO to secure TRIP funds to ensure this happens. It is really a partnership and one thing I would say about this TPO is that they are innovative and not simply looking to fulfill whatever their requirements are, but to actually push transportation in our community.

Husein Cumber, Executive Vice President, Corporate Development for Florida East Coast Industries -- he said he wanted to share the FEC relationship with the TPO and described it as unique because of the TPO’s forward thinking. “We sat down years ago and blue skied a project when diesel prices were high. We wanted to reduce emissions. We have 16 trains a day running down the east coast of Florida to Miami. So we talked about putting some capital to natural gas and how could we accelerate that project. Jeff was able to look at CMAQ (congestion mitigation air quality) and other unique funding options. The Miami Dade MPO felt left out because this was so visionary. We are the first railroad to have LNG in revenue service. The Federal Railroad Administration gave their approval. A lot of that was showing support from the community and the ability to convert and reduce emissions along the east coast. George (Gabel) spoke about a traffic issue for San Marco south of downtown. Three major railroads come together here and it creates significant traffic issues. There are hospitals and other vital services and businesses around that corridor... From a private perspective it’s nice to look at the TPO as a partner and not a public entity. It is the willingness to work together on challenges, develop a plan and then execute it. This is regulatory but also stakeholder support. It is great to have a partner like the TPO.”

Melissa Ross, host of daily public affairs program “First Coast Connect” on NPR: “I am pleased to say for several years the TPO has been one of our title sponsors. This is a positive association for us at WJCT because the mission of the agency aligns well with the issues and pain points that our listeners care about. They are very interested in transit issues and issues dealing with long-range regional planning, sustainability, energy and sustainability. It’s wonderful to have the resources available here to book
subject matter experts and align our brand with this brand. It is gratifying to hear from the TPO that because we run spots online referring to the TPO, people have learned more about the organization from that association. That makes me feel great because we are raising awareness about positive things in this community. We always welcome pitches and info about these issues from everyone that is here today.

Tom Larson, chair of the North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition: “I have been involved with the TPO in a volunteer capacity for some time. I’ve learned a lot about the different issues that have taken place and are being developed for our area. That led me to be more involved with the clean fuels coalition which DOE has designated as a clean fuels coalition. I sit on that board. We advance alternative fuels through community education and exchange ideas on market issues. Most recently the TPO supported and fostered the engagement of our community with charging stations for electrical vehicles. We have 25 electric vehicle power stations in publically accessible locations to help develop the market places and assure buyers of availability. I’d like to think I’ve had some influence over that and worked with JEA’s (local utility) electrification. The opportunity to participate in the TPO’s clean fuels program has long been a hallmark of the TPO. I inserted myself, became welcomed and involved in the byways in the TPO’s community engagement. I participate in public events, community events, forums and we’ve gotten to the average car buyer. It’s all because of the outreach we are engaged in with various community organizations... I also serve as the leader of the Sierra Club who is interested in clean energy. We all have ideas for engagement and it helps me to educate the Sierra Club members around the state to understand the nuances. When you are in the public dialogue you learn that one sentence can click with people. We have to keep educating people and include them regardless of where they are. People feel like they make a difference when they send in the comment or deal with a member of the TPO. That process is pretty effective.

Some people want to move faster. We are limited by funding and different views and other investments. But we still talk about it in a civil way and explore things through pilot projects. We develop the alternate options whether it’s JTA and the first coast flyer bus programs that folks are looking forward to. We can do better but we are working on it. We are a very sprawling city (post WWII) and a growth city so we have a hard time connecting urban centers. We may not have all the procedures in place to help us design sustainable growth or smart growth but we are trying. We have to do rail, bus, intermodal and keep the dialogue going regardless of where you live. Can I use the bus to get from beach to downtown? How long? How can I shorten it? We need to figure out how to change and the TPO serves as a nexus for that dialogue. We are helping to address infrastructure issues. When you talk about the North Florida TPO under Jeff and his fine team it is the lead, premier organization to talk about infrastructure and how to effectively move our produce among port, rail to other parts of the country. Better roads for the transfer of cargo and how we move our cars as well. It is an organization that is built around four designated counties so it is really a reflection of NE Florida. They are truly working together to help NE Florida. When you see prioritization lists you know the TPO board are all unanimous as a region on where we want to go. They get all the players together to pool our resources and effectively manage and provide you with a list showing where the money will be spent to help NE Florida which is why it’s premier TPO in the state of Florida... Transportation professionals and citizens support the process to include bike pedestrian and how we connect trails and the projects that help smaller agencies connect walkability and livability for their citizens that might otherwise not get funded. Plus the ride share program is an option sponsored by TPO to get folks out of their cars... As we transition to alternative fuels (which started as cooking oil in St. Johns County) and it is expanding in the region the smaller partners can’t make the switch unless there are higher numbers among the partners. So they have an incentive to convert to CNG. Another thing we are doing is the electric charging
stations. Orange Park town hall is the next place I want to put one so that government there can see how easy and how effective this is. They come to Jeff to help facilitate these efforts whether they are private industry or public – they are all coming to him so when you get the priority list or the five year plan or the 25 year plan you are getting issues that have been voted on, discussed and are unanimous for what the region wants. You can feel confident in going to your bosses that they are making things better...The goal is to improve regional connectivity and make assets more efficient as a whole. The TPO is helping us to ensure that decisions are regional and better for the whole area with the limited resources we have. This is a go-to organization.”

Joe Stephenson, executive director, Northeast Florida Regional Transportation Commission
He stated, “This is all true and accurate and it has not always been that way. I came here in 1987 to work with FDOT stationed in St. Augustine. It was recently the 2nd district from the 5th district and I was supposed to get St. Johns and Putnam counties integrated into D2. We called it the Jacksonville MPO at that time. I said that my time wasn’t justified because they weren’t dealing much with either county. My boss said they’d keep me informed. The next time I talked MPO was in 2000 when I was Public Works Director for St. Johns County. In 2000 the census showed that St. Augustine had reached an urbanized area. I was involved then with the MPO again. It was in a state of change in 2002. But not long after – 2004 era, the MPO became the TPO and moved out of Jacksonville and became an independent agency and since then has truly become a regional agency that incorporates all its neighbors. It also includes Baker and Putnam counties which aren’t even part of the urbanized area. They are an important part of the region. In 2011 there was a transportation study commission created and, based on that, the legislature created the transportation commission (RTC) and I came out of retirement to provide my services to that organization. The TPO is a primary supporter of the RTC and have provided their resources, their support and we could not do our work without them. Mr. Larson mentioned the waste oil to bio diesel program. I was the Public Word Director when we did that. The TPO did all the public info about it because we were too small an agency to do that. The TPO put us in contact with a network of agencies that were interested in that and made us more famous that we wanted to be. They are a vital part of our network and they have the RTC support and appreciation.

Doug Conkey, former Clay County Commissioner and Clay Chamber Executive Director. He said he had a biding interest in infrastructure. He chaired the TPO two years and was also a long-standing member. “The TPO is a premiere organization and I am proud to be a part of it in various ways over the years.”

Barney Roberts, long-time member of the Citizens Advisory Committee. “I’d like to take this opportunity to express gratitude for the progress we’ve had over the past four years and I wanted to commend the staff for the hard work that they have done here in Jacksonville. This is like our super bowl and this facility is a landmark activity for those of us who have worked together to make Jacksonville the best possible place to live and raise a family. That is our slogan. My comments today are in support of that and the TPO. I am grateful for what we are doing, for what FDOT inspires us to accomplish. I’m impressed with the proactive stance of JTA and FDOT and how they don’t give in and how the step up to the plate in transportation efforts. I am Impressed with the support from contractors in the region who work with FDOT; we are making Florida a place to visit. I am grateful for all the hard work the citizens are doing to help us improve especially congestion. I’m so grateful and it is good to be here on this day and celebrating the progress we are making. Also one more tidbit that FL is leading the nation to not having so many bridges that are in disrepair and not having as much congestion as the rest of the nation.”

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.
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North Florida Transportation Planning Organization  
TMA CERTIFICATION 2016–PUBLIC MEETING  

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2016**  
980 North Jefferson Street - TPO Board Room

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