As 2014 concludes the North Florida TPO’s 10 year anniversary of being an independent agency, this annual report includes not only highlights from 2014, but also summarizes key accomplishments from the past decade and looks to the future. It has been my pleasure to have served on the North Florida TPO Board since 2009 and as the Chair in 2014. This experience has been a highly rewarding way to serve our region, create positive change and promote progress for a strong future.

I would also like to recognize the 75 other elected officials and agency representatives who have served on the board over the past ten years. Their leadership has enabled the North Florida TPO to grow and flourish as the premier forum for cooperative regional transportation planning. The TPO’s accomplishments have been recognized at the federal level, with the Federal Highway and Transit Administrations citing the TPO’s noteworthy practices in their certification review. At the state level, the Florida Transportation Commission acknowledged the North Florida as the model regional transportation planning organization.

One of our greatest achievements began to take shape early last year. We broke ground on the Regional Transportation Management Center with completion expected by the fall 2015. This facility will serve as the heart of our regional transportation management efforts, bringing together staff and technology that save lives, time and money. We also completed a multi-year effort by adopting the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan which identifies our transportation investments in road, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, safety and technology projects to meet the needs of the future.

Recognizing the region’s critical role as a freight and logistics hub, the TPO continued the North Area/JIA Future Rail Study to identify a new rail route that will speed cargo travel between the port and intermodal centers. The St. Augustine Commercial Vehicle Truck Loading and Delivery Study in process will help reduce traffic conflicts and congestion in historic areas. Continuing to champion alternative fuels in the region, we completed the North Florida Alternative Fuels, Vehicles and Infrastructure Master Plan and made over $4 million in investments to advance the transition to alternative fuels. As part of that commitment, we are embarking upon an effort to install electric vehicle charging stations throughout the region, with JEA serving as our first utility partner.
With our favorable climate, bicycling is increasing in popularity, yet we are challenged by available infrastructure and safety issues. The Regional Bicycle Master Plan identified priority subareas and regional route needs, providing a framework for more in-depth studies such as the Riverside/San Marco and Beaches area initiatives begun in late 2014. In addition to planning for improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, the TPO maintained a focus on safety with the Slow Your Roll St. Augustine bicycle and pedestrian safety campaign. The highlight of last year’s commuter services program was our partnership with Deutsche Bank to increase awareness of rideshare options. We continued our longstanding partnership with the Jacksonville Business Journal for the ninth year to host the Global Trade & Transportation Symposium and Power Breakfast focusing on “transportation tomorrow” with the advent of driverless vehicles.

The North Florida TPO is unique in that it goes far beyond the federally required functions and has taken a leadership role in elevating and addressing other transportation issues including freight mobility, intelligent transportation systems and alternative fuels. When we changed our name to the North Florida TPO in 2008, we added a tagline – Plan • Fund • Mobilize. These three words aptly summarize our past, define our present and guide our future.

Commissioner Nancy Sikes-Kline
2014 North Florida TPO Chairman

What is the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization?

Federal transportation legislation requires that a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) be designated for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 people in order to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process, as a condition of receiving federal funding. Congress created MPOs in order to ensure that existing and future expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. MPO Boards are comprised of representatives from local government and governmental transportation authorities.

There are about 400 Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the U.S. including 27 in Florida. Some MPOs are part of a city or county government, serving as a municipal transportation planning function. Others are hosted by a regional planning council or planning commission. The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Jacksonville Urbanized Area (MPO) was officially designated in 1978 by Florida Governor Reuben Askew, covered the Jacksonville area only and was staffed by the City of Jacksonville Transportation Planning employees. The MPO voted to become independent in 2003 as the boundary was expanded to include St. Augustine and parts of Clay County and moved in 2004 to its current location as an independent state agency. Subsequently, the Board added ex-officio members representing Baker, Putnam and Flagler counties, as well as the U.S. Navy.

The name was changed to the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (North Florida TPO) in 2008 to better reflect the agency’s mission and service area. As the independent regional transportation planning agency for Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties, the North Florida TPO’s jurisdiction covers an area of over 3,000 square miles and 1.3 million citizens. Under Board direction, the TPO is led by an Executive Director with professional staff in transportation planning, technical analysis, communications and finance. Funding comes from federal and state grants, member counties and transportation agencies.
"It’s been an honor to serve with these elected officials, the staff and consultants. I’ve been pleasantly impressed. This is truly a regional-minded group and it’s proactive, not reactive."

Brian Reaves, Nassau County Ocean, Highway and Port Authority

"It’s such a delight to be a part of this - it’s regionalism at its best. Everyone gets along and no one is fighting for their individual fiefdom."

Donna Harper, Jacksonville Transportation Authority

“Officials, staff and consultants – we’re all a team.”

Doug Conkey, Clay County Commission

"I served on the TPO Board from 1999-2003 and 2011 to presently. It is a privilege to be a part of such a wonderful partnership among all of the counties, cities and authorities to make transportation the best in the region."

Doyle Carter, Jacksonville City Council

In addition to our current members, we would like to thank the many elected officials and agency representatives who have served on our board over the past ten years.
The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) details the TPO's annual budget and planning tasks. In addition to federally required tasks, the TPO has conducted numerous studies to identify needs and develop solutions for a variety of transportation issues across our region.

- Integration of Economics and Freight Mobility
- Penman Road Study
- 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan
- Congestion Management Study for Duval County
- Congestion Management Study for St. Johns County
- North Jacksonville Rail Service Study
- Safety/Security in Transportation Planning Process
- First Coast ITS Coalition
- Jacksonville Port Terminals Multimodal Impact Study — Phase 2
- Safety/Security of the Transportation System for Motorized and Non-Motorized Users
- Northwest Outer Beltway Planning Study
- Traffic Safety & Incident Management Handbook
- Lighthouse Park Neighborhood Traffic Circulation Study
- 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan
- North Florida Strategic Safety Plan
- Dynamic Detour System “Trailblazer” Feasibility Study
- Regional Transportation Authority Study Commission
- SR 21 (Blanding Boulevard) Corridor Study—Clay County
- Argyle Area Transportation Circulation Study
- Study of Design Principles for Mobility
- North Florida Freight, Logistics and Intermodal Development Plan
- Clay County Transit Study
- St. Johns County Transit Development Plan
- Argyle Area Aggressive Driving Campaign
- Congestion Management Plan/Process Update
- Future Rail Corridor Assessment — Phase 2
- St. Johns County Multi-Modal Transportation Center
- SR 200/A1A Nassau County Access Management Study
- St. Augustine Mobility Institute
- Transit Planning for the City of St. Augustine
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan
- Annual Mobility Report
- 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan
- Nassau County Transit Study
- St. Augustine Commercial Vehicle Truck Loading and Delivery Study
- CR 220 Corridor Study
- Port of Fernandina Traffic Impact Study
- Future Rail Corridor — Phase 3
The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) details the funding and progress of transportation projects through study, design, right-of-way acquisition, utilities and construction over a five-year period. The current adopted TIP encompasses projects for fiscal years 2014/15 through 2018/19. Each year a List of Priority Projects is created to be funded in the new fifth year of the TIP.
Highlights from projects completed over the past ten years include:

» I-295 and Collins Road interchange
» I-10 and I-95 interchange improvements
» St. Augustine Bridge of Lions rehabilitation
» SR 9B Phase 1 from I-295 to U.S. 1
» I-10 six-laning from Cecil Connector to I-295
» Beach Blvd six-laning from Intracoastal Waterway to St. Johns Bluff
» SR 21 (Blanding Blvd) six-laning from Knight Boxx Road to Old Jennings Road
» US 17 Doctors Inlet Bridge six-laning
» US 17 from Wells Road to I-295 lane addition
» US 301 from Callahan to I-95 four-laning
» US 17 St. Mary's River bridge rehabilitation
» Timucuan Bike Trail
» US 1 and CR 210/Railroad overpass

These are a few of the transportation initiatives included in the List of Priority Projects to be considered for funding in 2019/2020:

» I-295 and I-10 lane additions
» Mathews Bridge
» Regional Commuter Rail
» SR 313 (312 Extension)
» Atlantic/Southside Boulevards Intersection improvements
» College Drive Extension North
» Main Street widening
» SR A1A widening and bike lanes

The TIP is developed through an extensive annual process that includes review of unfunded priority projects, public agency submittals, the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan Cost Feasible Plan, local government comprehensive plans, concurrency management systems, the congestion management system plan and public input. Current major projects underway include SR 23/First Coast Expressway, I-295 express lanes and the Overland Bridge replacement.
Between 2010 and 2040 our region’s population is expected to grow 42 percent to two million residents. Total employment will increase 40 percent resulting in nearly one million workers. The Path Forward 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) completed in 2014 is the framework for planning and investing to meet these challenges.
Accomplishments:

The 2040 LRTP fine-tuned the use of performance measures in evaluating potential projects. Land use scenario planning was an innovative approach for the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan completed in 2009. Particular attention was given to the varying needs of the urban, suburban and rural areas within the region, as well as the interconnected nature of transportation and land use in shaping communities. The 2030 LRTP, completed in 2004, was our first multi-county transportation plan. Recognizing that our transportation network should be seamless to travelers across county lines and support regional mobility, the 2030 Plan included the “Clay-St. Johns Connector” which is now the First Coast Expressway.

Future Plans:

Long range transportation planning will continue to evolve based on changes in demographics, growth patterns, economic development and technology. Key issues will be the “graying” of our population and the implications of automated and connected vehicles affecting how we travel. By 2040 one in four people in our region will be age 60 or older*. Fifteen percent will be at least 70 and a staggering six percent will be 80 or older. All of which leads to pressing questions: At what age will people retire in the future and how will this affect commuting patterns? Will more people work and shop from home? When we do travel, how will intelligent transportation systems make travel easier and safer? It is hoped that these demographic shifts and technical innovations will help narrow the vast gap between transportation needs and limited funding.

This two-year effort combined extensive technical analysis and public outreach to determine residents’ priorities. Input was gathered via surveys, an interactive website, public workshops, community events and small group meetings. Feedback from all sources indicated an increased interest in expanding transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities in the region. Considering projected growth, transportation system needs and public input, nearly 700 potential projects costing over $27 billion were identified. However, projected revenues will cover less than one third of that cost. The projects were evaluated against goals and objectives, and prioritized to select those that would provide the greatest return on investment.

The final Cost Feasible Plan, approved November 13, 2014, contains 193 projects totaling $7.78 billion in current year dollars. The projects include roads, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and safety improvements. Funding allocated for transit, bicycle and pedestrian projects is 66 percent higher than in the 2035 Plan from 2009. Together, the 2040 projects provide a return on investment of $1.94 for every $1 invested for a total benefit of $14.7 billion.

The Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) officially broke ground at a January 10, 2014, ceremony. More than an operations center or office building, it is the physical manifestation of true partnership and many years of continuing, comprehensive and cooperative planning among agencies including the North Florida TPO, Florida Department of Transportation and Florida Highway Patrol.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS AND TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT
Over the past decade, ITS accomplishments have accumulated swiftly from concept to completion:

» Formed the North Florida Intelligent Transportation Systems Coalition and developed a Regional ITS Master Plan
» Developed a Dynamic Detour System
» Provided funding for Road Ranger program
» Developed and deployed TIMe4Safety Traffic Incident Management Training for Responders
» Completed 205 miles of freeway and arterial management systems with 75 miles under construction
» Installed Road Weather Information Systems on 18 bridges for evacuation alert purposes
» Deployed over 140 Bluetooth sensors throughout Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties
» Installed a stadium contraflow signal system for the Jacksonville Sports Complex at Bay Street
» Installed transit signal priority on Atlantic Boulevard from San Pablo Road to Regency Square and Philips Highway from Greenland Road to Emerson Street
» Installed automatic vehicle location, automatic passenger counters and on-board cameras on JTA buses
» Installed i-Stop electronic lighted JTA bus stop signage at 15 locations
» Activated My Florida 511 web and phone personal traffic alert service

Future Plans:

Alas, we still have no flying cars but automated and connected vehicles will definitely change the way we travel. Autonomous features such as lane departure warning and pre-collision assist are available on many cars today and self-driving cars have been presented in concept stages. Testing is already underway to develop a wireless communications network including cars, buses, trucks, trains, traffic signals, cell phones and other devices so that vehicles can communicate with each other as well as traffic signals, work zones, toll booths, school zones, and other types of infrastructure. This technology will also alert vehicles to pedestrians and bicyclists. The intelligent transportation systems of the future will greatly enhance our safety and mobility.
Currently, moving freight through Jacksonville’s seaports is not as efficient as it could be due to limited rail access. Shipping containers moving to or from JAXPORT’s Dames Point or Blount Island Marine Terminals travel by truck on highways to intermodal yards on the west or south side of Jacksonville where they are transferred from trucks to rail. In addition, the existing rail line through Downtown Jacksonville is complicated by over 40 at-grade rail crossings and a minimum one-hour wait to connect with the mainline. A new rail line is needed to maintain competitive freight movement and avoid increasing highway congestion, safety conflicts and road maintenance needs as truck volumes increase.
Accomplishments:

Over the past ten years, the North Florida TPO and its regional partners have evaluated regional freight movement and infrastructure needs, recommended improvements and programmed investments as part of a comprehensive and integrated intermodal approach to meeting North Florida’s future freight and logistics needs.

The 2005 Freight Mobility Study provided policy recommendations and specific projects to maintain our economic competitiveness and ensure state funding for the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) is spent where it is needed most. The projects addressed minor intersection and access needs, operational and ITS needs, capacity needs, major intermodal issues and railroad grade separation issues. Subsequently, the 2007 North Jacksonville Marine Terminals Multimodal Impact Study evaluated the impact of JAXPORT container growth on SIS highway and rail facilities, and assessed the potential for an on-dock or near dock intermodal rail terminal. The study concluded that developing a near dock intermodal terminal with rail access would require a significant capital investment. Additional targeted roadway improvements in key freight corridors were recommended to be beneficial regardless of the development of a new terminal.

The 2012 North Florida Freight, Logistics and Intermodal Framework Plan was developed in conjunction with regional partners to define a common vision, provide a policy framework, identify short and long-term actions, and help ensure that elements and projects can be quickly placed within local and state plans for consistency and fiscal programming. The plan evaluates three components — infrastructure, markets and business climate — and lays the groundwork for identifying future projects.

Future Plans:

If we want our region to continue succeeding as a freight and logistics hub, we must ensure our infrastructure keeps pace with growth and potential opportunities. Air, sea, rail and roadway travel, as well as those critical intermodal connections, must be cost effective and reliable for the freight industry that helps drive our economy. At the same time, we must ensure that we balance the economic benefits with impacts to motorists, property owners and the environment.

Accomplishments:

The third phase of the North Area/JIA Corridor Future Rail Feasibility Study began last year and continues the task of locating a potential new alignment for an east/west rail line connecting the CSX Kingsland Subdivision service line (east of I-95) and the CSX Mainline and Norfolk Southern rail lines located west of US 1. The previous studies identified the needs and potential alignments and narrowed the number of possible alignments from 17 to three. This third phase will document and reconcile the proposed alignments with local comprehensive plans, airport master plans, port plans including JAXPORT’s ongoing strategic master plan, and local zoning and land use. State and federal lands and environmental resources will also be considered. The final report will identify a preferred alignment and any potential obstacles.

The TPO also began the St. Augustine Commercial Vehicle Truck Loading and Delivery Study in 2014 with completion expected in June 2015. This study will develop a commercial delivery management plan recommending ideal routes and locations for commercial delivery vehicles to travel and park, and deliver their cargo without conflicting with visitor traffic, damaging historic properties, or contributing to congestion or noise and air pollution. The critical locations being studied are sections of Orange Street, Cordova Avenue, Cathedral Place and Charlotte Street.
The Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was completed in 2014 and serves as a guide to plan improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodation throughout the North Florida TPO region. While there has been some progress in recent years, portions of the region continue to rank very poorly at a national level in terms of bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodation. This Plan and its recommendations are designed to improve the region's standing and to make it a better place to walk and ride. Plan development was coordinated with the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan update and builds upon recommendations from previous studies.
In late 2014 the TPO began a study of the Riverside, San Marco and the Beaches areas to analyze bicycle and pedestrian conditions and recommend routes, bicycle parking and signage. A safety analysis will also be included with education, enforcement and engineering recommendations. The Riverside and San Marco areas were selected for the study to complement plans for a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path along the Fuller Warren Bridge connecting Riverside and San Marco. The Beaches were selected because they have the highest bicycle and pedestrian crash rates in the region. The study will be completed in June 2015.

Accomplishments:

The TPO has historically provided funding for a variety of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Two of the most significant projects are the Timucuan Trail and Cecil Commerce Center Recreational Trail systems. For urban cyclists, the TPO installed 149 bike racks in Jacksonville’s Central Business District.

In 2006, the TPO developed the First Coast Regional Greenways & Trails Plan which identified the top 25 corridors to improve and create a regional network. The St. Augustine Bicycle Plan completed in 2011 includes recommended routes, parking and safety measures.

Future Plans:

As part of its ongoing multimodal planning efforts, the TPO will continue to conduct targeted bicycle and pedestrian studies across the four-county region. Additionally, the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan includes over $300 million (future year) in bicycle and pedestrian projects and over $150 million (future year) in bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along roadway projects.
In 2014 the TPO began the Nassau County Transit Study. Working in coordination with local Nassau County and regional transportation stakeholders, the study will identify opportunities and goals for providing transit service within and to the county.
Accomplishments:

The North Florida TPO includes transit in regional multimodal planning projects such as the Long Range Transportation Plan. For Duval County, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) has responsibility for mass transit service and planning per an agreement with the City of Jacksonville in the early 1970’s. The TPO provides transit planning for other counties in its service area and partners with JTA on transit planning and programming.

Previously, the North Florida TPO conducted transit studies for Clay County, St. Johns County and the City of St. Augustine. In concert with the City of St. Augustine, St. Johns County and the St. Augustine-St. Johns County Airport Authority, the North Florida TPO also studied options for a multimodal transportation center in the St. Augustine area.

Future Plans:

The TPO will continue to provide transit development planning services and program funding for Clay, Nassau and St. Johns counties, as well as program funding for transit services in Duval County and Jacksonville Transportation Authority projects. The TPO’s recently adopted Path Forward 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan includes the First Coast Flyer bus rapid transit (BRT) system, commuter rail and streetcars or similar transit technologies. The Plan also provides funding for the St. Johns River Ferry and a Regional Transportation Center multimodal transit hub in Downtown Jacksonville.

Study efforts completed thus far include analysis of population, employment and travel characteristics, outreach to various citizen and stakeholder groups and a survey. The study, scheduled for completion June 2015, will also evaluate information from similar peer communities regarding their transportation service and consider options for funding, governance and operations.
St. Augustine has lots of charm with residents, students and tourists walking, biking and driving along its historic streets. Unfortunately, it’s also a hotspot for crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians. Last year the North Florida TPO partnered with the City of St. Augustine on the Slow Your Roll St. Augustine campaign.
The public awareness campaign targeted St. Augustine residents and students through a website – SlowYourRollSt.Aug.com, video, television public service announcements, Flagler College radio, hyperscreen messages at key venues, utility bill inserts, brochures, posters and T-shirts. Free bicycle safety training was provided for the public at City Hall and the Home Again St. Johns One-Stop Center.

St. Augustine police officers conducted outreach and enhanced enforcement at high traffic intersections in the Historic District. Flagler College communications students took on the campaign as a class project, distributing brochures and T-shirts on campus and at community events, and sharing their experiences via Instagram. Crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians dropped 25 percent during the campaign period.

Accomplishments:

The Atlantic Beach Police Department teamed with the TPO in 2013 for the Yield to Life/LOOK ALL-Ways campaign featuring roadway, sidewalk and building stencils and stickers, T-shirts, utility inserts and posters in businesses. The Atlantic Beach Police conducted intensive sidewalk outreach and enforcement during the campaign resulting in a 71 percent decrease in bike/pedestrian-involved incidents at key intersections along Atlantic Boulevard.

Completed in 2012, the TPO’s Regional Strategic Safety Plan analyzed historical crash data, identified safety issues, objectives, strategies and recommended project priorities to ensure resources are dedicated to reducing fatalities in the North Florida region. That same year, the CareMore Driving Argyle campaign focused on seven square miles with a history of over 500 crashes per year. Incorporating a website, social media, DMS messages and PSA’s for television, radio and movie theaters, the effort targeted drivers in this highly congested area and exceeded the crash reduction goal by 80 percent.

Safety education and emergency response strategies were addressed in 2009 with TIMe4Safety Traffic Incident Management Training for Responders. The training included an extensive handbook and video training featuring 26 real life responders from local law enforcement, fire rescue and towing agencies participating in field interviews and a mock scene demonstration. The program has been deployed worldwide and won a National Award for Innovative Practice in Metropolitan Transportation Planning.

Future Plans:

The four “E’s” of safety - education, engineering, enforcement and emergency response – will continue to be the cornerstone of TPO safety endeavors. Public information campaigns have proven to be effective in focusing attention on problem areas and behaviors. Investments in intelligent transportation systems will advance safety efforts and modernize our transportation network. Partnering with law enforcement and other first responders in safety-related training and outreach promotes information sharing and coordination among all the agencies dedicated to improving safety.
In 2014 the Clean Fuels Coalition conducted two Drive Electric events showcasing the latest electric vehicles. Stakeholder working groups were formed to determine strategies for increasing the use of biofuels (biodiesel and ethanol), electricity, hydrogen, natural gas and propane. Input from these groups was used to develop the North Florida Alternative Fuels, Vehicles and Infrastructure Master Plan.
Building a Movement from the Ground Up:

How did the North Florida TPO become involved in the world of alternative fuels? The TPO has always included air quality considerations in transportation planning per federal regulations. As a result of the Jacksonville Community Council 2007 Air Quality Advocacy Task Force recommendations, the TPO began holding stakeholder meetings in 2008 to explore interest in the use of alternative transportation fuels. Through continued outreach and education, the TPO built a core group of committed stakeholders and in 2010 established the North Florida Clean Cities Coalition as a non-profit organization to encourage petroleum reduction in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties. Organized by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Clean Cities program has coalitions in nearly 100 communities across the United States with a goal of reducing petroleum use by 2.5 billion gallons per year by 2020. The organization was renamed the North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition in 2013 to better reflect its mission and has diverse stakeholders including businesses; fleet managers; vehicle dealers; fuel providers; environmental advocates; federal, state and local government agencies; and private citizens. The TPO provides Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to staff and support Coalition activities.

Future Plans:

Working through the North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition, the North Florida TPO will continue to pursue a diverse agenda of education and awareness events aimed at overcoming barriers to adopting alternative fuels, vehicles and infrastructure. Strategic investment to encourage conversion of large petroleum-consuming fleets will help create a baseline in alternative fuel use that will make it economically feasible for fuel suppliers to expand infrastructure without additional assistance. The TPO will also continue to partner with electric utilities to expand charging infrastructure across the TPO service area. As we provide ongoing support to achieve petroleum reduction goals through education, relationship-building and targeted investment, we are also positioning the region as the alternative energy hub of the Southeastern U.S.

The Plan includes fuel trends and opportunities, strategies to advance alternative fuel use in the region and initial project investments. The North Florida TPO is providing over $4 million in funding to assist St. Johns County and the Jacksonville Transportation Authority convert their fleets to compressed natural gas (CNG) and construct fleet and public access CNG stations; help Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) convert locomotives to liquefied natural gas (LNG); support the City of Jacksonville’s acquisition of CNG sanitation trucks; and back JAXPORT’s development of a clean truck program to reduce port emissions. Finally, the TPO is partnering with JEA to install electric vehicle charging stations, branded as ChargeWell, throughout the JEA service area.
The North Florida TPO teamed with Deutsche Bank in 2014 to promote rideshare alternatives to employees. The “Double Dare” campaign included a video, brochure and incentives. Employees gathered in each Deutsche Bank location to mark their home locations on a map, see how many fellow employees live near them and learn about Cool to Pool rideshare program benefits. Employees received incentives for registering in the database and forming carpools. The campaign exceeded its goal by 80 percent.
Accomplishments:

The North Florida TPO has a long history of providing rideshare services in the region. Over the past ten years staff members have worked with numerous companies and organizations to educate employees on the benefits of carpooling and the TPO’s free Emergency Ride Home program. Two of the largest employers with successful programs are the Mayo Clinic and CSX. The Cool to Pool rideshare program, updated in 2011, offers a matching database site that enables users to find a rideshare match and track commutes via carpool, transit, biking and walking. When participants log their commutes they can see the amounts of fuel saved and burned, money saved, calories burned, and the amount of emissions saved and produced.

Some of the challenges in encouraging commuters to share the ride to work include a lack of HOV lanes, highly dispersed employment centers and free or low cost parking as compared to other metro areas. In 2013, the TPO conducted focus groups of current and potential carpoolers to gain further insight in their decision-making process. Those currently carpooling had formed carpools with fellow employees they already knew. Saving money was cited as the greatest benefit, but they also enjoyed having someone to talk to while commuting, and appreciated the lack of stress when they didn’t have the driving duties. They liked to relax, do some work, or even take a nap. Potential carpoolers suggested that the price of gas would have to be over $5 per gallon and that they would have to find a trusted suitable partner with the same schedule to motivate them to carpool. Another concern raised was a lack of transportation options in terms of reaching destinations via walking or transit if personal vehicles were not available. Given those issues, it is interesting to note that according to the 2013 U.S. Census American Community Survey, out of 629,568 commuters in our region, 9.1 percent or 57,291 carpool to work.

Future Plans:

The North Florida TPO is continuing to maintain the Cool to Pool rideshare matching database and outreach to employers. According to the 2014 Deloitte Global Automotive Consumer Study, 42 percent of U.S. Millennial consumers (versus 28 percent for other generations) are willing to use car-sharing, carpooling or similar services if they were readily available and convenient.
North Florida TPO staff members have extensive experience in transportation planning, programming and communications. Organizations invest a great deal of time and resources in developing employees’ knowledge and skills, and building relationships so that teams function efficiently. The TPO team’s long tenure enables the agency to retain institutional knowledge, avoid bureaucracy and focus on strategic partnerships, plans, programs and solutions.
Thank you to our local, state and federal partners, consultants, coalitions and professional associates for all your support during the past 10 years. Regional transportation planning takes extensive coordination and cooperation among multiple public and private sector agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the public. We value our relationships and are committed to our role in facilitating dialogue and cooperation to achieve our collective goals.

AIFBY Chamber of Commerce
American Planning Association
Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO)
Atkins Global
Baker County
Baker County Chamber of Commerce
Cambridge Systematics
City of Atlantic Beach
City of Fernandina Beach
City of Jacksonville
City of Jacksonville Beach
City of Neptune Beach
City of St. Augustine
Clay County
Clay County Chamber of Commerce
England-Thims & Miller
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida Highway Patrol
Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council
Florida Planning and Zoning Association
HNTB
Institute of Transportation Engineers
Jacksonville Aviation Authority
Jacksonville Transportation Authority
JAX Chamber
JAXPORT
M. Victoria Pennington Marketing & Public Affairs
Nassau County
Nassau County Ocean Highway and Port Authority
North Florida Clean Cities Coalition
North Florida ITS Coalition
North Florida Logistics Advisory Group
Northeast Florida Regional Council
Putnam County
Putnam County Chamber of Commerce
RS&H
Sprinkle Consulting
St. Augustine - St. Johns County Airport Authority
St. Johns County
St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce
Town of Baldwin
Town of Orange Park
U.S. Department of Energy
Urban Land Institute
WTS (Women’s Transportation Seminar)