

CITIZENS' GUIDE TO

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION [MTPO] FOR THE GAINESVILLE URBANIZED AREA

2009 NW 67 Place
Gainesville, FL 32653-1603
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<http://ncfrpc.org/mtpo>

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INTRODUCTION

How can YOU influence the future of transportation?

In the Gainesville Metropolitan Area, a well-designed efficient, effective and livable transportation system is critical to the mobility of the region, the viability of the community, and ultimately the economy.

Transportation is more than roads. Transportation affects our quality of life and provides a link for our essential needs (food, medical assistance, etc.). As the basic structure of our community's public space, our transportation system affects us in many ways, both as users and neighbors. It provides for a variety of transportation alternatives including automobiles, trucks, buses, motorcycles, bicycles and pedestrians. And it defines our neighborhoods and business districts. Because the transportation system is to serve YOU, the people, **YOU are encouraged to get involved in the transportation planning process.**

Why? Because YOU travel our roads and sit in rush hour traffic, you may have specific travel needs and desires you want to communicate. YOU travel on the transportation system nearly every day and see the need for improvements. YOU also enjoy bicycling and walking and may have ideas for sidewalks and bikeways that you want to share. YOU live in a neighborhood and can see the effect of roads on the quality of life of your community. YOU are an important part of the planning process.

This guide is designed to help YOU gain a better understanding of the transportation planning process and **to help YOU get involved and participate in the decision-making process concerning how YOUR transportation funds are spent in this area.** This guide also shows who can be contacted for more information and explains some of the technical terms and acronyms used in transportation planning. We want your input -- comments and concerns. YOU have the opportunity to get involved and make a difference in your community.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

What is the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization or MTPO?



A Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization, more commonly known as an MTPO, is a policy board comprised of locally-elected officials that is required for urbanized areas with a population over 50,000.

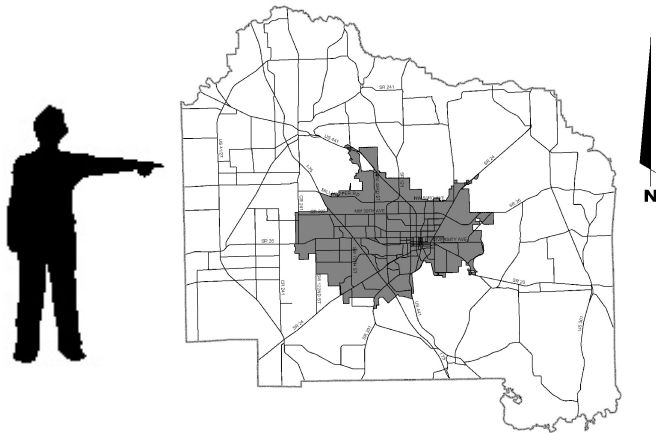
The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) for the Gainesville Urbanized Area has direct authority over transportation decisions in the Gainesville urbanized area. It is mandated by federal and state legislation and is responsible for establishing a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process.

The MTPO is responsible for making transportation decisions. In other words, planning how to meet short-term and long-term travel needs. As a contributor, you can help the MTPO develop plans which meet the mobility needs of the community and are practical to implement given financial, environmental and social constraints.

What area does the MTPO cover?



The area of planning responsibility for the MTPO does not include all of Alachua County, but rather the developed and developing portions in and around the City of Gainesville. As of 2003, the Gainesville Metropolitan Area (GMA) consisted of the Gainesville Urbanized Area (as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau), portions of the City of Gainesville outside the Gainesville Urbanized Area and portions of unincorporated Alachua County within the Alachua County Urban Services Area. The MTPO boundary is reviewed in accordance with each decennial census.



Transportation Planning Boundaries

How is this transportation planning funded?



Federal funding for highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian planning is provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) matches these federal funds with both cash and in-kind services. The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners and the Gainesville City Commission provide a local cash match.

Special funding for planning related to the Transportation Disadvantaged is provided through the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. These funds, derived through a fee on motor vehicle registrations, do not require a local match.

Who serves as members of the MTPO?



Voting members of the MTPO include the Mayor and six City of Gainesville Commissioners and the five Alachua County Commissioners. The membership framework is established by the Governor. The twelve voting members of the MTPO are listed below: Two MTPO members also serve on the Statewide Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC).

ADVISORY MEMBERS

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

District 2 Secretary or the Secretary's designee

University of Florida (UF)

Vice-President for Business Affairs serving for the UF President

Rural Advisor

Alachua County League of Cities Designee

The MTPO meets on a regular basis on second Mondays of the month usually at 3:00 p.m. These meetings are currently held in the Jack Durrance Auditorium located on the second floor of the Alachua County Administration Building.

MTPO STAFF

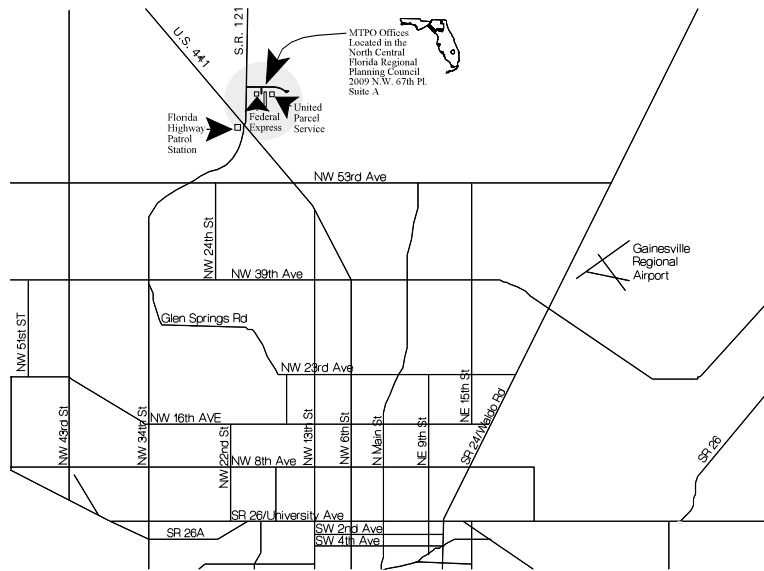
The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council (NCFRPC) participates in the urban transportation planning process as Staff to the MTPO. Planning Council staff provide day-to-day transportation planning expertise to the MTPO and carries out the policy decisions of the MTPO.

STAFF MEMBERS

Scott R. Koons, AICP, Executive Director
 Marlie J. Sanderson, AICP, Director of Transportation Planning
 Lynn C. Franson-Godfrey, AICP, Senior Planner
 Michael B. Escalante, AICP, Senior Planner

The address for the MTPO is 2009 NW 67 Place, Gainesville, FL, 32653. MTPO office hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.





Who else is involved?



In addition to citizen input, the MTPO also receives comments and recommendations from five standing committees - the Bicycle/ Pedestrian Advisory Board, the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee and the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board.

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Board or B/PAB consists of citizen volunteers representing the Gainesville Metropolitan Area who have a special interest and expertise in bicycle and pedestrian issues. This Board reviews transportation plans and programs from a citizen perspective and makes recommendations to the MTPO.

Members of this Board are appointed by the MTPO, the Gainesville City Commission and the Alachua County Commission. If you are interested in serving on this Board, please contact the City of Gainesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator at 334-5000 ext. 5411.

The B/PAB meets on a regular basis, usually on the Tuesday, preceding the CAC meeting, at 7:00 p.m. B/PAB meetings are held in the Grace Knight Conference Room, at 21 East University Avenue, Gainesville. The public is invited, and encouraged, to attend meetings of this Board

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Citizens Advisory Committee or CAC consists of 15 citizen volunteers representing the Gainesville Metropolitan Area. This Committee reviews transportation plans and programs from a citizen perspective and makes recommendations to the MTPO. In addition, this Committee also serves as an advisory body to the Alachua County Commission. Each year, as a County advisory body, the CAC reviews the draft Alachua County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prior to its adoption by the County Commission.

Usually, five (5) citizens are appointed to the CAC by the MTPO each year. CAC members serve three-year terms. If you are interested in serving on this Committee, please contact MTPO staff at 955-2200.

The CAC meets on a regular basis, usually on a Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. CAC meetings are held in the Grace Knight Conference Room of the Alachua County Administration Building at 12 SE 1st Street, Gainesville. The public is invited, and encouraged, to attend meetings of this Committee. CAC meeting minutes and current meeting packets are viewable on the MTPO's website at <http://ncfrpc.org/mtpo/index.html>

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Technical Advisory Committee or TAC consists of local, regional and state agency representatives. The TAC reviews transportation plans and programs from a technical perspective and makes recommendations to the MTPO.

The TAC meets on a regular basis, usually on a Wednesday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. TAC meetings are held in the Gainesville Regional Utilities Conference Room, 301 SE 4th Avenue, Gainesville. The public is invited, and encouraged, to attend meetings of this Committee. TAC meeting minutes and current meeting packets are viewable on the MTPO's website at

<http://ncfrpc.org/mtpo/index.htm>

TAC agency representation includes:

Alachua County Growth Management;
Alachua County Environmental Protection;
Alachua County Public Works;
Alachua County School Board;

B/PAB Staff, City of Gainesville;
City of Gainesville/Alachua County Arborist;
City of Gainesville Planning & Development Services;
City of Gainesville Public Works;
City of Gainesville Regional Transit System;
Florida Department of Transportation;
Gainesville Regional Airport;
Gainesville Regional Utilities;
North Central Florida Regional Planning Council;
University of Florida Facilities Planning & Construction; and
University of Florida Parking Services Administration.

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED COORDINATING BOARD

The Alachua County Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board provides advice and direction on the provision of transportation services for elderly individuals, low-income individuals, persons with disabilities and children at risk. Members of this Board are appointed by the MTPO. If you are interested in serving on this Board, please contact MTPO staff at 955-2200. The Coordinating Board, which makes recommendations to MV Transportation, the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Alachua County has representatives from:

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization [Chair];
Citizen Advocates - Agency & User;
Community Action Agency;
Early Childhood Services;
Elderly;
Florida Department of Children and Families;
Florida Department of Education;
Florida Department of Elder Affairs;
Florida Department of Transportation;
Mass Transit Agency;
Medicaid- Agency for Health Care Administration;
Military Veteran;
Persons with Disabilities;
Private Transit; and
Public Education.

The regular meeting date of the Coordinating Board is the second Wednesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. The Coordinating Board meets on a bi-monthly basis. The Coordinating Board meetings are held in the Jack Durrance Auditorium located on the second floor of the Alachua County Administration Building. The public is invited, and encouraged, to attend meetings of this Board.

MTPO PLANS AND PROGRAMS

Long Range Transportation Plan

A twentyfive-year transportation plan has been adopted by the MTPO through the year 2035. This Plan identifies major improvements to the transportation system which will be needed in the future to address projected patterns and volumes of traffic. Updates to this plan are prepared and adopted about every five years.

Transit Planning

Transit planning activities include the development of a Transit Development Plan (TDP). The TDP is a short-range plan, prepared by the Regional Transit System, concerning existing and future demand for transit (bus) service. This plan establishes a five-year plan for bus service. A current and up-to-date TDP is required in order to receive federal and state financial assistance for the Regional Transit System. A transit service evaluation is conducted to coincide with the Long Range Transportation Plan Update.

Bicycle Facility Planning

The MTPO is actively involved in conducting bicycle planning studies. In 2001, the MTPO adopted the Alachua Countywide Bicycle Master Plan. In addition, the MTPO also monitors bicycle activity. This information is reported every five years in a document entitled Bicycle Usage Trends Program Report.

Management Systems - Gainesville Metropolitan Area Mobility Plan

Work continues to implement management systems required for the Gainesville Metropolitan Area (GMA) by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century and SAFETEA-LU. The Mobility Plan serves as the congestion management process for the GMA. As of 2007, MTPO staff prepares an annual status report on the Mobility Plan strategies. Results of this report are used and incorporated in the development of the Transportation Improvement Program. This will happen primarily through the annual development of transportation priorities that are developed over the summer and forwarded to FDOT annually.

Level of Service Studies

Each year, MTPO staff, working in cooperation with state and local agencies, develops multimodal [automobile, bicycle, pedestrian and transit] information concerning levels of service (traffic congestion) for arterial and collector roads in the Gainesville Metropolitan Area. This information is shared with state and local agencies and is used to support local comprehensive planning activities.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The purpose of the TIP is to identify all transportation projects to be funded over the next five-year period. This document is used to coordinate needed transportation projects with respect to timing, location and source of funding. In Alachua County, there are two different TIP documents. One is prepared and adopted by the MTPO for the Gainesville Urbanized Area, while the other is prepared and adopted by the Alachua County Commission for all of Alachua County. These documents are developed, reviewed and adopted in the Spring of each year.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP identifies the planning efforts to be undertaken by all agencies in the Gainesville Metropolitan Area in order to maintain a comprehensive, cooperative and continuing transportation planning program. This document serves as the program budget for MTPO staff.

INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

The following information and documents are available. If you would copies of this material, contact MTPO staff at 955-2200.

Alachua Countywide Bicycle Master Plan

Year 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Summary (under development)

Public Involvement Plan (reviewed annually)

Regional Transit System Ridership Report (updated annually)

Traffic Counts and Level of Service (updated annually)

Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (updated annually)

Transportation Improvement Program (adopted each Spring)

Transportation Project Priorities (adopted each Summer)

Unified Planning Work Program (adopted every two years in the Spring)

Several MTPO documents are viewable on the MTPO's website at
<http://ncfrpc.org/mtpo/index.html>

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE/PROVIDE COMMENTS

The MTPO encourages you to provide written or verbal comments as often as you wish.

☐ **Written Comments**

- 1) Type or write legibly, type or print your name under your signature, include your complete address;
- 2) keep a copy for your records; and
- 3) send written comments to:

MTPO for the Gainesville Urbanized Area
2009 NW 67 Place
Gainesville, Florida 32653-1603

☐ **Verbal Comments**

- 1) Have a pencil and paper ready for taking notes;
- 2) ask for the name of the person taking the call for future reference; &
- 3) call the MTPO staff at (352) 955-2200

☐ **In Person**

You are always welcome to stop by the MTPO Offices located at 2009 NW 67 Place, Gainesville, Florida and speak to the MTPO staff.

Attend Public Meetings

☐ **Public Workshops -**

Workshops are where you are brought up-to-date on the details of the plan or program being presented at the workshop. You will also be provided with details regarding the next steps to be taken prior to the next workshop or public hearing. You are invited to provide comments regarding the plan or program being presented. Public workshop are held prior to crucial decision-making in the planning process.

❑ **Public Hearings -**

Public hearings are held by the MTPO to consider the adoption of the plan or program being presented at the hearing.

❑ **Advisory Committee and Board Meetings -**

As noted earlier, there are several advisory committees and boards that advise the MTPO, Gainesville City Commission and Alachua County Commission concerning transportation issues. You may contact the members of these committees and boards, or attend the meetings, to voice your questions and comments regarding transportation planning issues.

❑ **MTPO Meetings -**

The public may speak at these meetings with the approval of the MTPO chairperson. The MTPO meets on the second Monday of the month. However, meetings may be cancelled when there is no business requiring MTPO action. MTPO meeting are televised live on Cox Cable Channel 12. MTPO meeting minutes and current meeting packets are viewable on the MTPO's website at <http://ncfrpc.org/mtpo/index.html>

❑ **Transportation Information Network -**

In order to increase the level of citizen participation in the transportation planning process, the MTPO has established the Transportation Information Network. The purpose of the Network is to provide a forum to educate and inform the public about MTPO plans and strategies. This network consists of individuals representing the following groups:

- community
- environmental
- business
- neighborhoods
- professional
- low-income, elderly and disabled

From time to time, Transportation Information Network workshops are held in Gainesville to discuss proposed transportation plans and programs. These meetings are conducted as interactive workshops and are held both during the day and in the evening. If you are interested in becoming a member of this network, please contact MTPO staff at 955-2200.

DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Board (B/PAB) - Citizen volunteers who provide input to proposed bicycle and pedestrian transportation planning and programming and also make recommendations to the MTPO.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) - Citizen volunteers who provide input to proposed transportation plans and programs, provide input to proposed transit transportation plans and programs and also make recommendations to the MTPO.

Congestion Management System (CMS) - A systematic process that provides information on transportation system performance and alternative strategies to alleviate congestion and enhance the mobility of persons and goods.

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) - State agency granted the legislative authority to develop and maintain State transportation facilities and services.

Intermodal - Moving people and goods using various combinations of transportation modes (transit, rail, automobile, truck, bicycle, etc...).

Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) - A transportation plan which provides guidance in the development of an efficient transportation system over a period of 20 years.

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) - An agency created under federal and state law to provide a forum for cooperative decision-making in regard to regional transportation issues. Voting membership includes the Mayor and six City of Gainesville Commissioners and the five Alachua County Commissioners.

Multimodal Transportation System - A comprehensive transportation system including the following options: auto, bus, truck, motorcycle, bicycle, pedestrian and transit.

Project Development & Environmental Study (PD&E) - A study performed to determine the feasibility of a transportation modification by identifying possible alternatives and evaluating the social, economic and environmental impacts associated with each alternative.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) - Local and state planners, engineers, transit operators and other technical representatives who provide technical input regarding transportation plans and programs and make recommendations to the MTPO.

Transit Development Plan (TDP) - This is a short-range plan which profiles existing and future demand for transit (bus) service, analyzes current bus routes and establishes a five-year plan for bus service. The MTPO staff provides the staff support necessary for the development of the annual TDP. A current and up-to-date TDP is required for the receipt of federal and state financial assistance.

Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) - Refers to those persons who, because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age or who for other reasons, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users (SAFETEA-LU) - A federal act established to develop a national intermodal transportation system which is economically efficient and environmentally sound, encourages citizen participation, provides the foundation for the nation to compete in a global economy, and will move people and goods in an energy efficient manner.

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) for the Gainesville Urbanized Area Nondiscrimination Notice

It is the policy of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) for the Gainesville Urbanized Area that no person shall on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, familial status, religious status, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation under any MTPO program or activity.

It is the policy of the MTPO that minority business enterprises (MBE) as defined in 49 CFR Part 23, as amended, shall have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts financed in whole or in part with MTPO funds.

For further information about these laws, regulations and discrimination complaint procedures for resolution of complaints of discrimination, contact Mr. Marlie Sanderson, MTPO Title VI Liaison, at 2009 NW 67th Place, Gainesville, Florida 32653-1603, telephone number (352) 955-2200 extension 103.

Organización Metropolitana de Planificación del Transporte (MTPO) Para el Área Urbana de Gainesville Aviso de No Discriminación

Es la política de la Organización Metropolitana de Planificación del Transporte (MTPO) para el Área Urbana de Gainesville, que ninguna persona sea excluida de participar, se le niegue beneficios, y que de ninguna manera sea sujeta a discriminación o retaliación por cualquier programa o actividad de la MTPO, ya sea por motivo de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, edad, incapacidad, familia, religión, el estado civil, orientación sexual o identidad de género, de acuerdo a lo previsto por el Título VI del Acta de Derechos Civiles de 1964, el Acta de Restauración de Derechos Civiles de 1987 y el Acta de Derechos Civiles del Estado de la Florida de 1992.

Es la política de la MTPO que las empresas de negocio de minorías (MBE) como definidas en el 49 CFR Parte 23, como enmendado, tendrán toda oportunidad de participar en el funcionamiento de contratos financiados en su totalidad o en parte con fondos de la MTPO.

Para mayor información sobre estas leyes, regulaciones y procedimientos para quejas de discriminación y resolución de quejas de discriminación, puede contactar al Sr. Marlie Sanderson, del Título VI de la MTPO, al 2009 NW 67 Place, Gainesville, Florida 32653-1603, teléfono (352) 955-2200 extensión 103.