You may not think about these transportation issues every day, but we do. The Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is the regional agency that plans for future transportation needs, seeks and coordinates funding, and mobilizes resources through outreach and consensus building. The TPO has direct authority over transportation decisions in the Okaloosa-Walton urbanized area. It is mandated by federal and state legislation and is responsible for establishing a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process.

The Okaloosa-Walton TPO is an independent agency responsible for:

- convening regional stakeholders to identify and prioritize transportation needs;
- developing regional transportation plans and programs to address those needs; and
- obtaining federal and state transportation funding to complete projects.

One of the TPO’s most important roles is the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the region. By law, the plan must be updated every five years, have a 20- to 25-year time horizon, and address road, transit, freight, bike, and pedestrian needs.

In practice, this plan serves as the blueprint for our region’s transportation future.

Over the next 18 months the TPO will be updating the LRTP. We want to hear from you. Come tell us what you think the transportation system should look like in 2040.
Looking out for the Future

A typical long range transportation planning process involves projecting future growth patterns and transportation needs based on historical trends and the most recent data available. Over the next 18 months, we will study our past, envision our future, project our transportation needs, and identify how to fund the needs established.

The 2040 LRTP, known as Outlook 2040, will create a list of transportation projects, including road, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements, that are needed, and will include how they may be funded through the year 2040. This will become a blueprint for maintaining and enhancing the region’s transportation system.

Developing the LRTP will be a collaborative effort between the public, local and regional government agencies, and the state. During the development of the LRTP, our communities will:

- examine the future transportation needs of the region;
- determine how best to address the transportation needs; and
- prioritize projects based on transportation dollars available.

The Long Range Plan is actually made up of two plans:

- Needs Plan
- Cost Feasible Plan

The Needs Plan, as its name implies, is a plan that identifies all of the transportation projects needed to meet the demands of today and tomorrow. This Plan is commonly referred to as the region’s “wish list” of transportation projects. The existing LRTP, developed in 2012, identified almost 100 needed transportation projects with a total cost exceeding $6.2 billion.

The Cost Feasible Plan will balance the project costs with available transportation revenue. There will not be enough projected transportation revenue to meet all the needs. However, there may be opportunities to consider alternative revenue sources that could help close the gap between what we need and what we can afford.

With the adoption of the Cost Feasible Plan, the region will have its blueprint for transportation projects and the funding priorities to implement them.

Elements of a Long Range Transportation Plan

There are six elements to the LRTP:

1. Vision – How and where do we want to grow, live, and travel?
2. Goals and Objectives – What do we want the Plan to achieve?
3. Needs Plan – What projects are needed to fulfill the vision?
4. Financial Resources – What funding will be available and what new sources will be needed?
5. Cost Feasible Plan – How do we set priorities within funding constraints?
6. Plan Adoption – How do we reach consensus and formally adopt the Plan to obtain future funding?
How You Can Get Involved

Website
Visit www.wfrpc.org/o-wtpo/long-range-plan to learn more about the TPO, the LRTP, project schedule, events, and projects under consideration. You may also provide feedback, let us know your needs and priorities, submit comments, ask questions, and sign up to receive newsletters.

Presentations
Would your civic, business, or community group like to learn more about the TPO or the plan update and share your thoughts? We’ll come to you! Call or e-mail us to let us know about your group.

Public Workshops
Join fellow citizens, businesses, and community leaders in discussing transportation needs, priorities, and funding options. Dates, times, and locations will be published in the newspaper, on the website, on the WFRPC Facebook page, and in the newsletters.

Newsletters
Outlook 2040 newsletters are distributed and posted on the website. They contain the latest happenings and information on upcoming workshops. Call or e-mail if you would like to receive the newsletter.

The Okaloosa-Walton TPO welcomes your input, questions, and comments on the TPO planning activities or the Long Range Transportation Plan Update. Please contact LRTP Project Manager, Kate Daniel, or Public Involvement Coordinator, Brandi Whitehurst, for more information.

Who is the Transportation Planning Organization?

The Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is the local, intergovernmental transportation policy board for the urbanized areas of Okaloosa and Walton counties in Florida. The board is comprised of local government officials who make decisions regarding transportation at the regional level. The Okaloosa-Walton TPO is required by federal and state legislation to establish a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. The TPO also works to increase safety, security, accessibility, mobility, and connectivity for people and goods.

In addition to the TPO board, the Okaloosa-Walton TPO has a Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and a Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC). These committees provide input and recommendations to the board from a technical standpoint and from the citizens, point of view.

Want to get involved? The Okaloosa-Walton TPO is accepting applications for citizens to serve on the CAC. To request an application, please contact our Public Involvement Coordinator, Brandi Whitehurst.
How a Plan Becomes a Project

All major transportation projects have their roots in a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). In order to receive state or federal funds, projects must be included in the LRTP. Once a project is identified in the LRTP the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) will place a priority on the project. That priority is then sent to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for consideration of funding in the Five Year Work Program. Typical transportation projects have four major phases; Project, Development & Environmental (PD&E), Engineering Design, purchase of Rights-of-Way, and Construction. Funding for these phases may come from a variety of sources, including state, federal, local, or private funds. If all the funds necessary to complete each of the four phases was in hand, it could take 8 to 10 years to complete each project and have the facility open to traffic. Unfortunately, the funds are rarely in place to complete all the phases and some projects may take 15 to 20 years to complete.

What is Our Role in Future Travel?

The 2035 Plan was adopted in March 2012 and assumed the region would grow by an additional 91,000 people and 45,000 jobs by 2035. Much of this growth was anticipated to occur in the northern and western portions of the study area. The new 2040 Plan must be adopted by March 2017 and you are an integral part of the planning process.

Please join us in creating the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan by attending one of our upcoming public workshops. You'll learn about the plan development process, growth trends, and types of development that drive transportation choices and alternatives for shaping growth and the way we live, work, and travel in the future. We need to know how you envision your future, your values and priorities, and what tradeoffs you are willing to make.