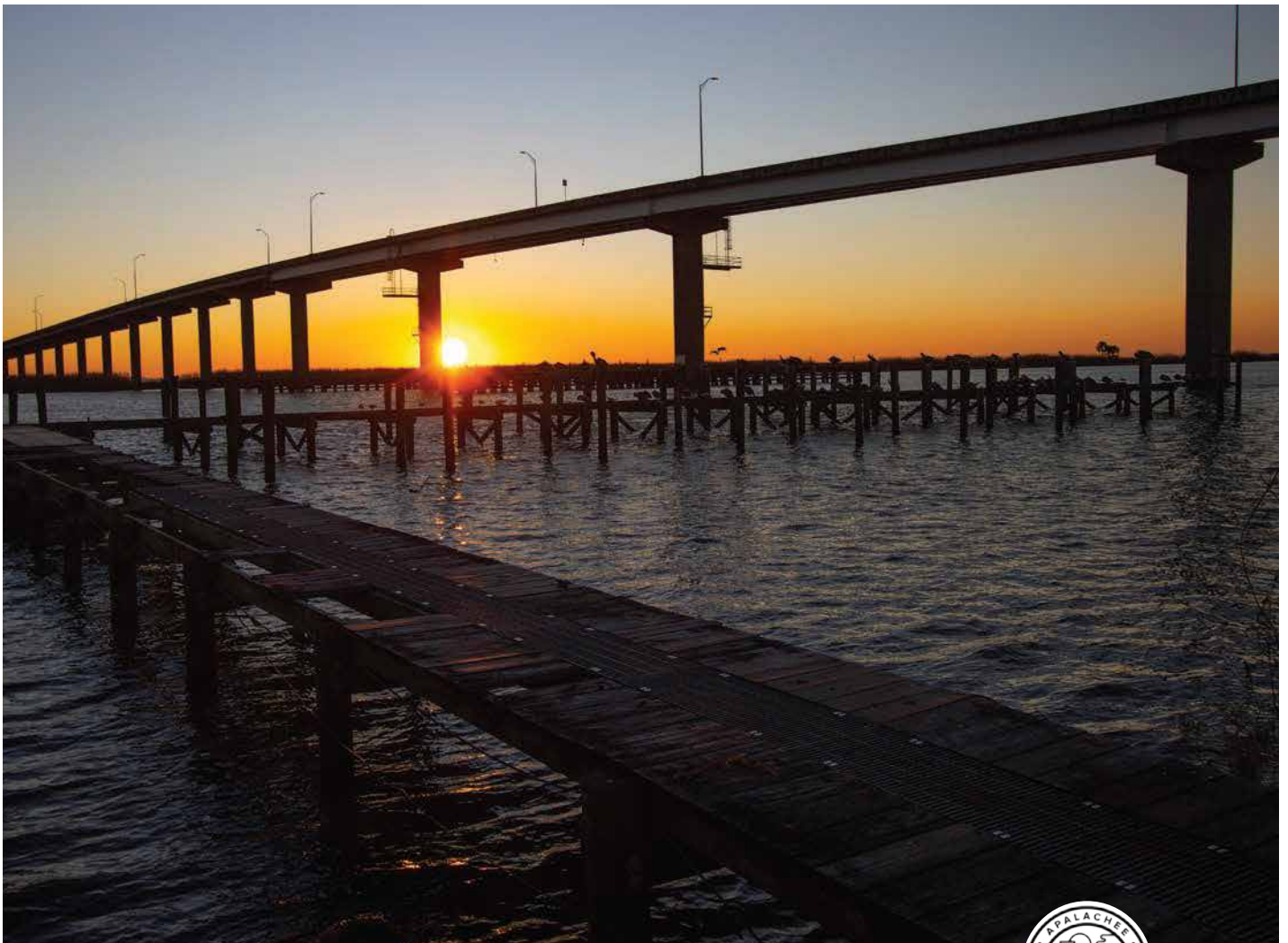




2025-2045
**FOUNDATION
& PROCESS**
ELEMENT
ADOPTED JANUARY 30TH, 2025



Developed by ARPC with funding provided through FDOT.





2025-2045 **APALACHEE** **REGIONAL RURAL** **TRANSPORTATION** **PLAN**

**Prepared for Apalachee Regional Planning Council and
The Florida Department of Transportation, District Three.
Prepared by ARPC Staff.**

Adopted: January 30th, 2025

**This report was financed in part by the U.S. Department
of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, the
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of Transportation, and local participating governments.**

**This document does not necessarily reflect the official
views or policies of the U.S. Department of
Transportation.**

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APALACHEE RRTP INTRODUCTION



Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, passed by Congress in 2015, continues the commitment to a cooperative, inclusive approach for Non-Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) areas in the transportation planning process and supports development of long-range transportation planning documents.

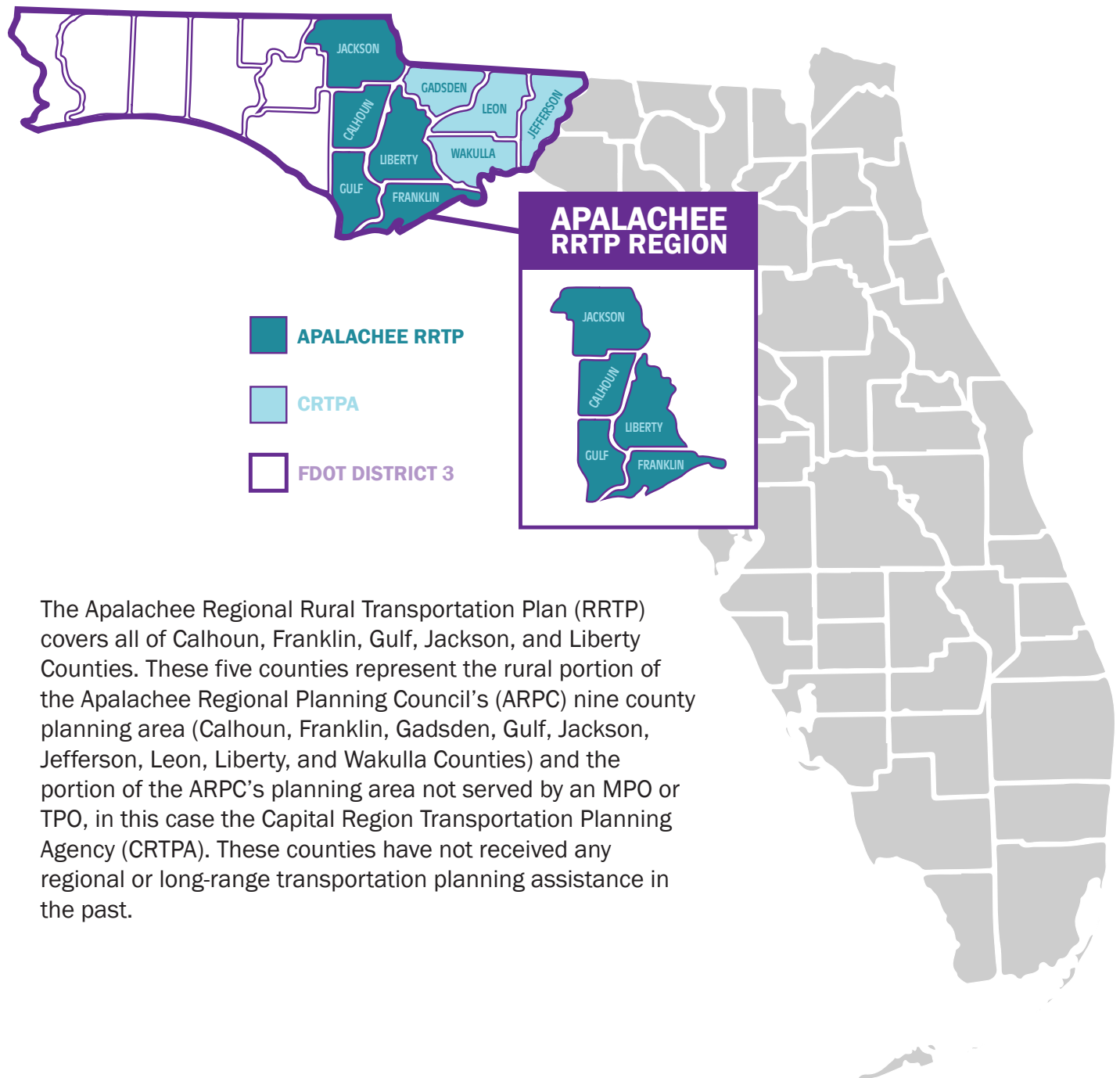
In 2018, The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) echoed the need for all areas to be represented with Long Range Transportation Plans, including rural areas. FDOT then decided to pilot Regional Rural Transportation Plans, starting with District 3 in Northwest Florida. The Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) performed the first pilot, ECRC Regional Rural Transportation Plan. It covers the rural, Non-Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) planning area portions of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes, Washington, and Bay counties.

This is FDOT's second pilot project, the Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP). In preparation of the RRTP, the five counties in the planning area; Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty entered into an Interlocal Agreement on February 8, 2022. Then, FDOT contracted with the Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC) March 6, 2023, to bring the community together in creation of the plan. As such, the RRTP is a partnership between the FDOT, ARPC, and the five rural counties of the Apalachee Region (Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty Counties). The two pilot RRTPs as well as the MPOs and TPOs together provide regional, long-range transportation planning assistance to the entirety of FDOT's District 3's sixteen counties.

There are many benefits to the regional, long-range transportation planning process and final product. Specifically, the purpose of the RRTP has been to collect information on the five-county area's greatest transportation needs, foster coordination and communication at a regional level, provide education to the community, and ultimately create a long-range transportation plan that aligns with the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP). More than just informative, the RRTP is designed to be a utilitarian document.

Moving forward there will be regular updates to the RRTP's projects, data and analysis, and interactive map, as well as continued public involvement including facilitation of the RRTP's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

APALACHEE RRTP PLANNING AREA



The Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) covers all of Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty Counties. These five counties represent the rural portion of the Apalachee Regional Planning Council's (ARPC) nine county planning area (Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, and Wakulla Counties) and the portion of the ARPC's planning area not served by an MPO or TPO, in this case the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA). These counties have not received any regional or long-range transportation planning assistance in the past.

Figure 1: Planning Area Map

APALACHEE RRTP FOUR ELEMENTS OF THE RRTP

The RRTP comprises four elements:

- This document, the Foundation and Process Element, goes over the four Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) emphasis areas and how they inform the RRTP as well as the overall planning process.
- The Existing Conditions and Analysis Element, provides an overview of the conditions and trends in the region as well as specific conditions and trends per the five counties of the RRTP: Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty.
- The Projects Element describes the project solicitation and scoring process and the short-term and long-term project needs throughout the area.
- The Implementation Element describes recommended next steps to procure funding for the projects.

The Foundation and Process Element goes over the impetus for the RRTP, the four Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) emphasis areas and how they inform the RRTP, and the process followed in creating the plan.



INTRODUCTION: FOUNDATION & PROCESS

The Foundation and Process Element highlights the drive for the RRTP, the four Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) emphasis areas and how they inform the RRTP, and the process followed in creating the plan.

FOUNDATION

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Office of Policy Planning develops Planning Emphasis Areas to support the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP).

The four topics outlined in the Florida Planning Emphasis Areas 2020 formed the foundation of the RRTP. They include safety; system connectivity; resilience; and automated, connected, electric and shared use (ACES) Vehicles. They have been incorporated into the RRTP through inclusion in the public involvement meeting presentations, the written plan, project categories, and project submissions with these elements received points in the scoring process. See the RRTP's Part 3: Projects Element for more information on the scoring criteria.

FLORIDA PLANNING EMPHASIS AREAS 2020

SAFETY

One of the Florida Planning Emphasis Areas of 2020 is Safety, and the RRTP echoes the importance of safety. A key principle identified in the Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) and/or Safe System Approach (SSA) and Florida's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is Vision Zero. Florida's Strategic Highway Safety Plan includes the key strategy, "Commit to Vision Zero as our top priority."



Figure 2: Florida's Vision Zero Branding

Vision Zero focuses on achieving zero fatal and serious injury crashes. This is a move away from focusing on reducing crashes in general.

See Figure 3: Safe System Approach, Part 1 and Figure 4: Safe System Approach, Part 2 for some of the key tenets of the Safe System approach to achieving Vision Zero from the Federal Highway Administration.

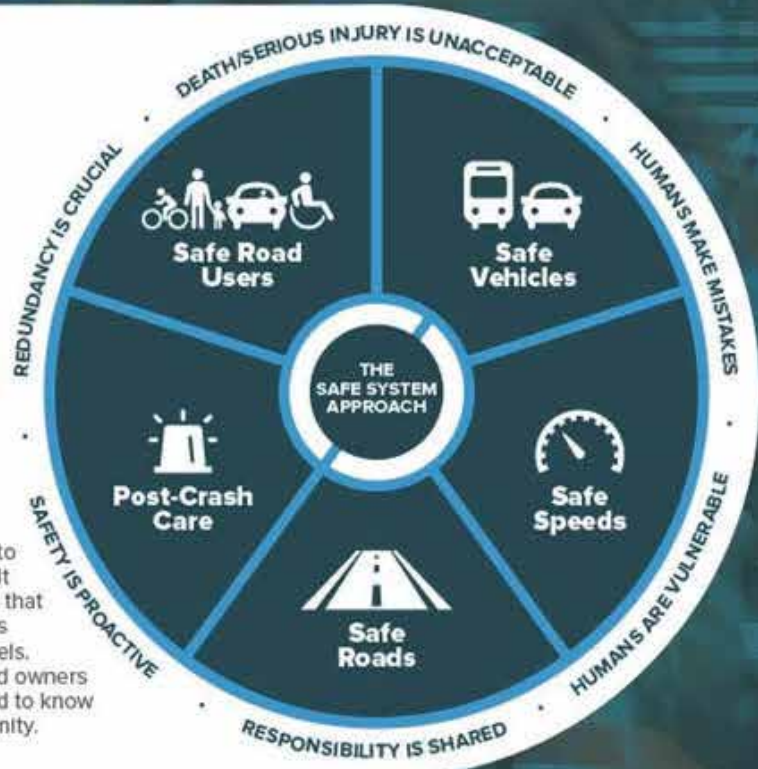
One approach to achieving Vision Zero is through a focus on Proven Safety Countermeasures (PSCs). PSCs are evidence-based, highly effective measures to decrease serious and fatal injury crashes. FHWA has great resources online regarding PSCs. See Figure 5: FHWA's Proven Safety Countermeasures.

THE SAFE SYSTEM

APPROACH

Zero is our goal. A Safe System is how we will get there.

Imagine a world where nobody has to die from vehicle crashes. The Safe System approach aims to eliminate fatal & serious injuries for all road users. It does so through a holistic view of the road system that first anticipates human mistakes and second keeps impact energy on the human body at tolerable levels. Safety is an ethical imperative of the designers and owners of the transportation system. Here's what you need to know to bring the Safe System approach to your community.



SAFE SYSTEM PRINCIPLES



Death/Serious Injury is Unacceptable

While no crashes are desirable, the Safe System approach prioritizes crashes that result in death and serious injuries, since no one should experience either when using the transportation system.



Responsibility is Shared

All stakeholders (transportation system users and managers, vehicle manufacturers, etc.) must ensure that crashes don't lead to fatal or serious injuries.



Humans Make Mistakes

People will inevitably make mistakes that can lead to crashes, but the transportation system can be designed and operated to accommodate human mistakes and injury tolerances and avoid death and serious injuries.



Safety is Proactive

Proactive tools should be used to identify and mitigate latent risks in the transportation system, rather than waiting for crashes to occur and reacting afterwards.



Humans Are Vulnerable

People have limits for tolerating crash forces before death and serious injury occurs; therefore, it is critical to design and operate a transportation system that is human-centric and accommodates human vulnerabilities.



Redundancy is Crucial

Reducing risks requires that all parts of the transportation system are strengthened, so that if one part fails, the other parts still protect people.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

FHWA-SA-20-015



Safe Roads for a Safer Future
Investment in roadway safety saves lives

Figure 3: Safe System Approach, Part 1

SAFE SYSTEM ELEMENTS

Making a commitment to zero deaths means addressing every aspect of crash risks through the five elements of a Safe System, shown below. These layers of protection and shared responsibility promote a holistic approach to safety across the entire transportation system. The key focus of the Safe System approach is to reduce death and serious injuries through design that accommodates human mistakes and injury tolerances.



Safe Road Users

The Safe System approach addresses the safety of all road users, including those who walk, bike, drive, ride transit, and travel by other modes.



Safe Vehicles

Vehicles are designed and regulated to minimize the occurrence and severity of collisions using safety measures that incorporate the latest technology.



Safe Speeds

Humans are unlikely to survive high-speed crashes. Reducing speeds can accommodate human injury tolerances in three ways: reducing impact forces, providing additional time for drivers to stop, and improving visibility.



Safe Roads

Designing to accommodate human mistakes and injury tolerances can greatly reduce the severity of crashes that do occur. Examples include physically separating people traveling at different speeds, providing dedicated times for different users to move through a space, and alerting users to hazards and other road users.



Post-Crash Care

When a person is injured in a collision, they rely on emergency first responders to quickly locate them, stabilize their injury, and transport them to medical facilities. Post-crash care also includes forensic analysis at the crash site, traffic incident management, and other activities.

THE SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH VS. TRADITIONAL ROAD SAFETY PRACTICES

Traditional

- Prevent crashes —————> Prevent deaths and serious injuries
- Improve human behavior —————> Design for human mistakes/limitations
- Control speeding —————> Reduce system kinetic energy
- Individuals are responsible —————> Share responsibility
- React based on crash history —————> Proactively identify and address risks

Safe System

Whereas traditional road safety strives to modify human behavior and prevent all crashes, the Safe System approach also refocuses transportation system design and operation on anticipating human mistakes and lessening impact forces to reduce crash severity and save lives.

WHERE ARE **YOU** ON THE SAFE SYSTEM JOURNEY?

Implementing the Safe System approach is our shared responsibility, and we all have a role. It requires shifting how we think about transportation safety and how we prioritize our transportation investments. Consider applying a Safe System lens to upcoming projects and plans in your community: put safety at the forefront and design to accommodate human mistakes and injury tolerances. Visit safety.fhwa.dot.gov/zerodeaths to learn more.

Proven Safety Countermeasures

SPEED MANAGEMENT



Speed Safety Cameras



Variable Speed Limits



Appropriate Speed Limits for All Road Users

ROADWAY DEPARTURE



Wider Edge Lines



Enhanced Delineation for Horizontal Curves



Longitudinal Rumble Strips and Stripes on Two-Lane Roads



SafetyEdgeSM



Roadside Design Improvements at Curves



Median Barriers

INTERSECTIONS



Backplates with Retroreflective Borders



Corridor Access Management



Dedicated Left- and Right-Turn Lanes at Intersections



Reduced Left-Turn Conflict Intersections



Roundabouts



Systemic Application of Multiple Low-Cost Countermeasures at Stop-Controlled Intersections



Yellow Change Intervals

PEDESTRIANS/BICYCLES



Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements



Bicycle Lanes



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB)



Leading Pedestrian Interval



Medians and Pedestrian Refuge Islands in Urban and Suburban Areas



Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons



Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration)



Walkways

CROSSCUTTING



Pavement Friction Management



Lighting



Local Road Safety Plans



Road Safety Audit

More specific to the RRTP's planning area is the resource, The Federal Highway Administration's Proven Safety Countermeasures in Rural Communities Guide. It recommends rural agencies and communities focus on implementing PSCs that address:

- Roadway Departure
- Intersections
- Pedestrian/ Bicyclist
- Speed Management

Operational and management strategies can help improve safety and reduce traffic congestion without constructing new roadways. Examples of particular interest in rural areas include:

Rural Road Weather Management

- Dynamic Message Signs (DMSs) or Portable Changeable Message Signs (PCMS) to provide real-time road and weather information to roadway users.
- Speed advisory messages regarding weather conditions and/or specific vehicle speeds.
- Road Weather Information System (RWIS) devices, like portable environmental sensing station units.

Rural Traffic Incident Management (TIM)

- Policies and procedures to quickly remove vehicles and clear the scene, have a plan for alternate routes, and clearly identified roles of first responders.
- TIM programs with courtesy or service patrols that help coordinate efforts in rural areas by assisting with incident management and maintenance crews.

Rural Work Zones

- Provide motorists with real-time traffic updates as they near a work zone. This can be done with smart work zone systems that include things like dynamic message signs, video cameras, and radar.
- Require motorists to turn on emergency warning flashers if they need to stop in a work zone. This helps alert others as they near the area.

Rural Seasonal Demand

- Contraflow or reverse lane operations to optimize the amount of space to travel the desired direction.
- Emergency shoulder use can also be used to increase the space available for travel.
- Adaptive signal control

Other examples include:

- Access management
- Active transportation options
- Dynamic speed limits
- Incentives to traveling off peak hours

Project submissions with safety elements could potentially get up to 20 of the 100 possible points in the scoring process.

SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY

Another of the Florida Planning Emphasis Areas of 2020 is System Connectivity. An important goal of a regional transportation plan is to look at how the transportation system functions throughout a large area. Instead of only considering the needs within smaller political boundaries such as municipalities or counties, this plan looks at the Plan's five county planning area as well as connections to neighboring regions' Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)/ Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs) and beyond. A well-connected transportation system serves national, statewide, and regional functions.

Additionally, the Plan aims to strategically set up the transportation for easy flow between different modes of transportation, such as bike paths that connect to park and ride lots, or rail that connects to seaports, for the efficient movement of both people and freight. It is also important to connect to a variety of quality transportation options to provide access to jobs, schools, and key destinations. Since the RRTP planning region includes coastal areas a top consideration for system connectivity was the ease of evacuation routes, bridges in good condition, and enhancing the transportation system for travel and tourism.

Maintaining existing facilities such as through resurfacing is a big focus for rural areas as well.

Project submissions with system connectivity elements could potentially get up to 15 of the 100 possible points in the scoring process.

RESILIENCE

Resilience is one of the Florida Planning Emphasis Areas of 2020. A resilient transportation system is able to return back to previous functionality quickly after an event or has prevented compromising events from happening in the first place. In the RRTP planning area a large consideration is flooding and stormwater. Measures to prevent bridges or roads from being impassable are important to the function of the regional transportation system and the safety of the community. Some of those measures may include raising a roadway, nature-based solutions like rain gardens or living shorelines, or well maintained ditches. Another way to continue the safe movement of people and goods is to have a network of travel options so if a road is out of order there is a nearby travel route to keep traffic moving safely. Finally, consider transportation solutions that will allow for the continued and safe flow of traffic if power is disabled, such as roundabouts instead of traditional signal intersections, is also important to transportation resilience.

Project submissions with resilience elements could potentially get up to 15 of the 100 possible points in the scoring process.

ACES VEHICLES

The final Florida Planning Emphasis Area of 2020 included in this Plan is Automated, Connected, Electric, Shared-Use (ACES) Vehicles. More and more technology is becoming a vital part of the transportation system to accommodate emerging vehicle technology and improve safety and traffic flow. Incorporating smart road elements allows for vehicle-to-infrastructure communication (connected vehicles) such as real-time road condition updates and traffic light preemption. Both Virginia and Michigan have begun designating Automated Corridors. The Virginia Automated Corridors (VAC) include over 70 miles of interstates and arterials in Northern Virginia. Cavnuue and Michigan DOT are developing the world's first connected and automated vehicle (CAV) corridor on Interstate 94. Modifications to roadways that will assist automated vehicles will also assist drivers. For example, automated vehicle technology benefits from wide and retroreflective lane striping, retroreflective signage not obscured by vegetation, and elements like chevron signing to keep the vehicle on the road when there are horizontal curves. Another change that will assist emerging transportation technology is a well thought out system of electric vehicle charging stations so electric vehicle drivers can safely travel longer distances. It is wise for communities to consider accommodating travelers by installing strategic charging stations where visitors can park and charge their car and visit local restaurants and shops while they wait. Shared-use cars, trucks, or bicycles can be a great option to reduce traffic congestion. When people do not have their own vehicle but use a car sharing company, they drive less. On the flip side, people who do not have their own bicycle but use a bicycle share option, bicycle more.

Project submissions with ACES vehicles elements could potentially get up to 15 of the 100 possible points in the scoring process.

RRTP PROCESS

The foundational element of the RRTP, the Florida Planning Emphasis Area of 2020, was carried out through the Plan process from beginning to end. Below is what the process looked like.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The ARPC engaged the public through a series of public meetings in the winter and spring of 2024. In addition to more traditional public meetings at local public establishments, such as libraries, staff also went to where people were already gathered, such as at youth baseball games. Furthermore, staff kept local elected officials abreast of developments through the ARPC Board meetings, our website, announcements in all 5 county local newspapers, announcements on all 5 county websites, notices on the Florida Administrative Register (FAR), and email.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

An essential component of the RRTP's public involvement has been engagement with the RRTP's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The role of the TAC is to act as local champions promoting the RRTP effort; reach out to the local government departments, citizens, and businesses; and bring recommendations and comments to the TAC meetings for inclusion in the RRTP.

The ARPC began working with the counties to assemble TAC members in the spring of 2024 and the TAC's kick off meeting was in June 2024.

Draft TAC bylaws were presented at the June 2024 TAC meeting, discussed and edited, and then the TAC approved and recommended the ARPC Board adopt the bylaws at the TAC's August 2024

meeting. The ARPC Board subsequently approved the TAC bylaws at their August 2024 board meeting. The bylaws for the TAC can be found [here](#). Monthly TAC meetings were held from June 2024 through the adoption of the RRTP.

INTERACTIVE MAP AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

The pilot RRTP effort also included gathering existing facilities, developing a Needs Plan of transportation projects the community identified, and an interactive mapping program. Data such as areas at risk of flooding, schools, and existing park and ride lots, have all been made available to the public. Furthermore, local to national resources have been researched for inclusion in the written synopsis and analysis of existing conditions.

PROJECT SOLICITATION AND RANKING

A major goal in public outreach was to solicit transportation needs from the community. Feedback was gathered from the community at large. Then the TAC prioritized transportation needs for each of the ten project categories: safety; system connectivity; resilience; ACES vehicles; capacity; resurfacing; bridge; bicycle pedestrian; park and ride lots; and freight, rail, and water/airport. Next, project scoring criteria were developed in coordination with the TAC. Then the project information was gathered from the TAC members and given to the scoring committee. Three transportation professionals who were not living in the planning area independently scored the projects, the scores were then averaged, and the projects were ranked. As local knowledge experts, the TAC then had the opportunity to discuss the rankings and make adjustments if the group was in agreement.

WRITTEN PLAN

Throughout the duration of the contract, staff have been gathering information for inclusion in the written RRTP. All of the efforts, processes, and learning are compiled in the RRTP. To make the information as helpful as possible, it has been divided into four elements and is set up to be used as a reference document where you can access the information when needed.

Once completed, the draft RRTP was then reviewed by the TAC and recommended to the ARPC Board for their approval. The ARPC Board passed a resolution to approve the project priorities/ ranking lists as well as the Regional Rural Transportation Plan.

AFTER THE INAUGURAL PLAN

FDOT FUNDING

As of the adoption of this Plan, applications for the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail program, Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP), and Transportation Alternatives (TA) program, from the RRTP's five counties (Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty) will be reviewed and ranked with recommendations to receive final ARPC Board approval. A workshop will be held for RRTP TAC members to review rankings and provide any needed recommendations prior to submission for Board approval. These ranking will be provided to the FDOT – District 3 by the draft and final priorities deadline (a program development schedule with deadline information is published at the beginning of each open cycle in GAP and on the FDOT Planning site).

This process will help the RRTP planning area submit high quality applications with a greater chance of competing well against other submissions across FDOT District 3.

PLAN UPDATES

The RRTP Needs Plan (project lists) will be evaluated annually. As funding mechanisms are identified and projects are funded, and/or new projects are identified, existing projects may move off the ranked lists or be reranked.

Major RRTP updates will include a review of all plan components and are anticipated to occur every five years.

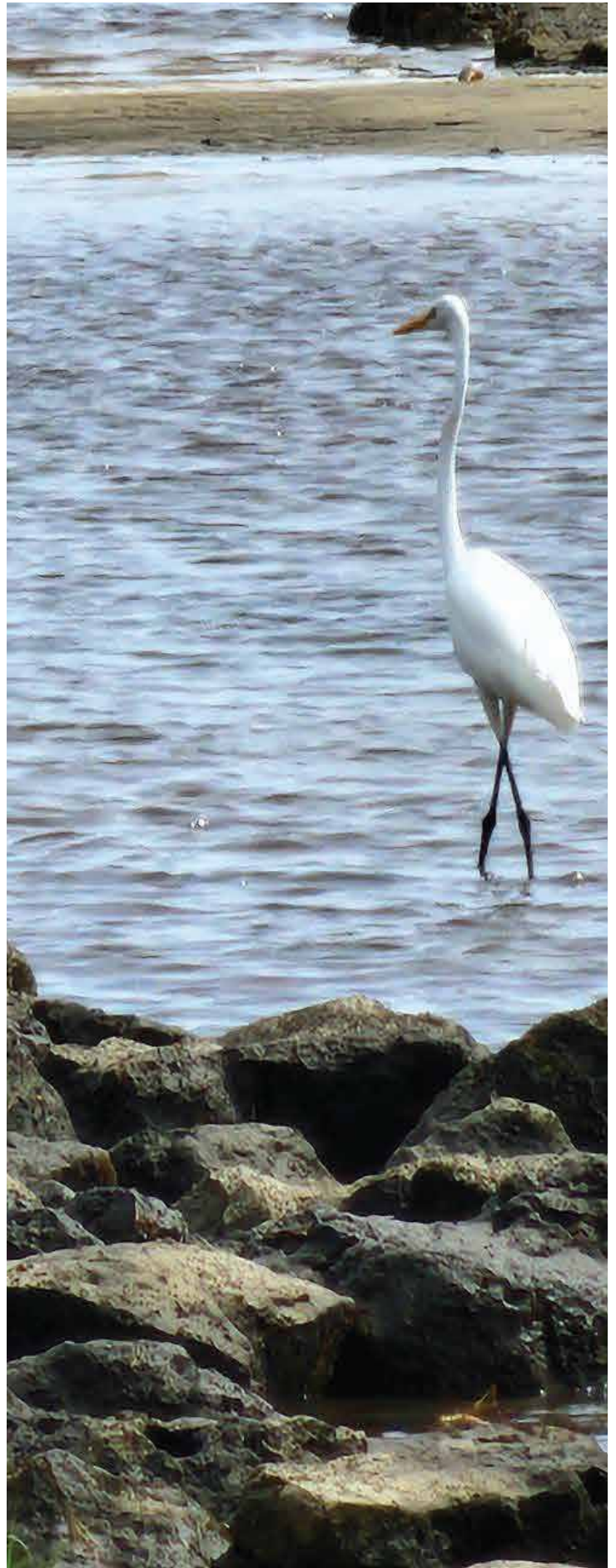
The project webpage will continue to be updated with relevant plan information and can be accessed [HERE](#).

CONCLUSION

This concludes the Foundation and Process Element—part 1 of the Rural Regional Transportation Plan (RRTP).

See the other elements of the RRTP for more information:

- The Existing Conditions and Analysis Element provides an overview of the conditions and trends in the region as well as specific conditions and trends per the five counties of the RRTP: Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty.
- The Projects Element describes the project solicitation and scoring process and the short-term and long-term project needs throughout the area.
- The Implementation Element describes recommended next steps to procure funding for the projects.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL BOARD

(at the time of the resolution to approve the RRTP: January 30, 2025)

Chair: Ricky Jones, Franklin

Calhoun County

Darryl O'Bryan, Sheila Blackburn

Franklin County

Ricky Jones, Sebrina Brown

Gadsden County

Brenda Holt, Evelyn Goldwire

Gulf County

Sandy Quinn, Jr., Johnny Paul, Michael Hammond

Jackson County

Kim Applewhite

Jefferson County

Chris Tuten, John Jones

Leon County

Rick Minor, Jack Porter, Lisa Miller

Liberty County

Doyle Brown, James Kersey, Davis Stoutamire

Wakulla County

Quincee Messersmith, Steve Remke

RRTP TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan's Technical Advisory Committee

Chair: Jim Peacock, Jackson County; Vice Chair: Clay Smallwood

Calhoun County

Darryl O'Bryan

Gene Bailey

Bill Gaskin

Hunter Flowers

Calhoun County Commissioner. Start: Dec. 2024

Calhoun County Commissioner. June – Nov. 2024

Blountstown City Council Member

Calhoun County Grants Administrative Assistant

Franklin County

Cheryl Sander

Anita Grove

Franklin County Commissioner

Apalachicola City Commissioner, Coastal Training Program Coordinator
at the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve

Resident of Franklin County (former FDOT employee)

John Berry

Gulf County

Sandy Quinn

Clay Smallwood

Jim McKnight

Gulf County Commissioner

Gulf County Assistant Administrator

Gulf County Director of Economic Development Committee

Jackson County

Paul Donofro, Jr

Jeff Register

Jim Peacock

Rett Daniels

Jackson County Commissioner. Start: Dec. 2024

Jackson County Road & Bridge Department Director

Resident of Jackson County (former County Commissioner)

Jackson County Deputy Administrator. June – Nov. 2024

Liberty County

Doyle Brown

Bradley Bryant

Noah Byler

Liberty County Commissioner

Liberty County Road & Bridge Department Superintendent

Liberty County Engineer



APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Local Partnerships. Regional Impact.

ARPC RESOLUTION No. 25-02

A RESOLUTION of the Apalachee Regional Planning Council (hereafter referred to as the "ARPC") certifying its approval of the Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP).

WHEREAS, the ARPC is the designated Regional Transportation Area to serve the regional needs of Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty Counties; and

WHEREAS, in its role as the Regional Transportation Area, ARPC assumed the role of creating a Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP), which commenced on March 6, 2023, through a contractual services agreement with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 3; and

WHEREAS, during development of the project, there was continuous coordination with FDOT District 3 and all local governments included in the study area and with the ARPC's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC); and

WHEREAS, public outreach efforts included additional meetings, presentations, written collateral, and a web page dedicated to the project, which included an interactive map; and

WHEREAS, project ranking criteria were developed and adopted according to the contractual agreement with FDOT;

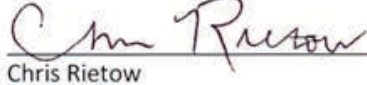
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ARPC BOARD THAT:

1. THE APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE REGIONAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN.

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 30TH DAY OF JANUARY 2025.

BY THE: APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL


Ricky Jones
ARPC Chair

ATTEST: 
Chris Rietow
Executive Director



APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Local Partnerships. Regional Impact.

ARPC RESOLUTION No. 25-03

A RESOLUTION of the Apalachee Regional Planning Council (hereafter referred to as the "ARPC") approving the Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) Project Priorities/Ranking Lists.

WHEREAS, the ARPC is the designated Regional Transportation Area to serve the regional needs of Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty Counties; and

WHEREAS, in its role as the Regional Transportation Area, ARPC assumed the role of creating a Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP), which commenced on March 6, 2023, through a contractual services agreement with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 3; and

WHEREAS, the RRTP will include a list of ranked projects that are identified for future funding with both short and long term priorities; and

WHEREAS, the future intent of the ARPC Rural Transportation Planning process is to have a major update of the RRTP every five years, with annual updates to the project rankings list; and

WHEREAS, ARPC Staff and RRTP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members developed evaluation criteria and ranked the plan's projects according to those criteria; and

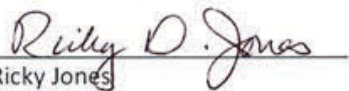
WHEREAS, project ranking was completed by the TAC at a meeting on January 16, 2025, and was recommended for ARPC board's approval;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ARPC BOARD THAT:

1. THE APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE REGIONAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROJECT PRIORITIES/RANKING LISTS.

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 30TH DAY OF JANUARY 2025.

BY THE: APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL


Ricky Jones
ARPC Chair

ATTEST: 
Chris Rietow
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) was initiated to give the rural counties of Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty a mechanism to collaborate in identifying and documenting their transportation needs. These five rural counties and their municipalities comprise the western half of the Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC). This Plan covers a 20-year planning horizon, prioritized short- and long-range projects, and meets the goals of the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP).

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

A Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), including representatives from the rural study area's jurisdictions and agency partners, was tasked with gathering transportation project needs from local governments, reviewing and approving evaluation criteria and project rankings, and making recommendations to the ARPC Board. The TAC held public meetings regularly throughout Plan development and will continue to meet to implement and update the RRTP.

NEEDS PLAN

The RRTP Needs Plan (located in Part 3, the Projects element) lists and ranks all identified projects by category. The top ten ranked projects in each category (Safety, System Connectivity, Resilience, ACES Vehicles, Capacity, Resurfacing, Bridge, Bicycle/ Pedestrian, Park and Ride, Freight/ Rail/ Waterport/ Airport) can be considered short-range needs (5-year) and the remainder are long-range needs (6 to 20-year). An interactive map including all Needs Plan projects and relevant data layers used throughout Plan development can be accessed [HERE](#).

POST PLAN ADOPTION

FDOT FUNDING

As of the adoption of this Plan, applications for the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail program, Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP), and Transportation Alternatives (TA) program, from the RRTP's five counties (Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty) will be reviewed and ranked with recommendations to receive final ARPC Board approval. A workshop will be held for RRTP TAC members to review rankings and provide any needed recommendations prior to submission for Board approval. These ranking will be provided to the FDOT – District 3 by the draft and final priorities deadline (a program development schedule with deadline information is published at the beginning of each open cycle in GAP and on the FDOT Planning site). This process will help the RRTP planning area submit high quality applications with a greater chance of competing well against other submissions across FDOT District 3.

PLAN UPDATES

The RRTP Needs Plan (project lists) will be evaluated annually. As funding mechanisms are identified and projects are funded, and/or new projects are identified, existing projects may move off the ranked lists or be reranked.

Major RRTP updates will include a review of all plan components and are anticipated to occur every five years.

The project webpage will continue to be updated with relevant plan information and can be accessed [HERE](#).