

# TITLE VI REPORT February 2004



Metropolitan Planning Organization  
for the Miami Urbanized Area



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION I: MPO ORGANIZATION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CTAC Membership Composition .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Vacancy Report.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>CTAC Demographic Report .....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Citizens Interested in Serving on CTAC.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<b>CTAC Minority Membership .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Citizen E-mail Distribution Lists.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>CTAC Attendance Policy and Report.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Public Comment at CTAC Meetings.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Citizen/MPO Board Member Appointment Schedule .....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Advertisement Methods.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<b>SECTION II: MPO DOCUMENTATION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Public Involvement Documentation .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>MPO PI Database .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>Public Involvement Evaluations .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>General Outreach Evaluation .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Special Project, Studies and Required Document Evaluations.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Triennial Evaluation.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<b>Community Participation.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Public Involvement Plan .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Citizen's Guide .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Awareness, Needs, and Accessibility Project.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Public Service Announcements.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Bicycle Pedestrian Program .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Community Transportation Forum.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Tri County Public Involvement Management Team (PIMT).....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Local Coordinating Board of Miami-Dade County .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Radio Shows .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Television Shows .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>MPO Website .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Unified Calendar of Events.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Annual and Quarterly Reports.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>MPO Distribution List.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<b>Student Outreach Strategies.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Required Work Documents Public Involvement .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Unified Planning Work Program .....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Long Range Transportation Plan.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Transportation Improvement Program.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Interactive Transportation Improvement Program.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Public Involvement Activities .....</i>	<i>18</i>
<b>TIP Public Comments .....</b>	<b>19</b>

<b>Public Involvement Staff .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Additional Staff .....</i>	19
<i>Training Courses .....</i>	19
<b>SECTION V: MPO PUBLIC HEARINGS .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Advertisement of Public Hearings .....</i>	20
<i>Accessible meeting times .....</i>	20
<i>Public Comment at Public Hearings .....</i>	20
<b>SECTION VI: SOCIOCULTURAL EFFECTS .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Sociocultural Effects Strategies and Techniques.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Community Characteristics Program.....</i>	21
<b>SECTION VII: MPO SERVICE EQUITY.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Distribution of Benefits and Impacts .....</b>	<b>22</b>

**LIST OF TABLES**

<b>Table 1: Citizens’ Transportation Advisory Committee Demographic Report.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Table 2: MPO Public Involvement Tools, Targets, and Tasks .....</b>	<b>6</b>

**LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure 1: Process for Public Involvement Evaluation .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Figure 2: Miami-Dade Areas of Analysis .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

- I-1 CTAC Vacancy Report**
- I-2 CTAC Demographic Report**
- I-3 CTAC Attendance Report**
- I-4 CTAC Agenda Showing Time for Public Comment**
- I-5 Committee Vacancy Advertisements**
  
- II-1 General Outreach Evaluation Form**
- II-2 Special Works and Required Documents Public Involvement Evaluation Forms**
  
- IV-1 Public Service Announcements: 2003 MPO PSA Scripts**
- IV-2 Bicycle Pedestrian Program: Event Flyer and Informative Display**
- IV-3 Community Transportation Forum: Meeting Agenda**
- IV-4 Unified Planning Work Program: Development Schedule and Call for Ideas Brochure**
- IV-5 Long Range Transportation Plan: Public Involvement Activities Schedule and Informative Brochure**
- IV-6 Transportation Improvement Program: Development Schedule and TIP Submittal Deadlines Letter**
- IV-7 Interactive Transportation Improvement Plan Brochure**
  
- V-1 Advertisement of Public Hearings**

## SECTION I: MPO ORGANIZATION

### CTAC Membership Composition

*Goal: To maintain membership composition in the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) that represents the demographics of the citizenry of Miami-Dade County.*



### Vacancy Report

Vacancy reports provide demographic and vacancy information for Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) citizen committees. Vacancy reports are included as an agenda item at every MPO Governing Board meeting (**Appendix I-1**). As a result, Board members have been more diligent about making their appointments. Due to the continuation of this procedure, CTAC has substantially minimized its vacancies, and has maintained a membership composition that more closely represents the demographics of the citizens in Miami-Dade County.

Currently CTAC has 32 active members and in Spring 2004 CTAC Secretariat and staff will be conducting a membership drive to fill vacancies.

### CTAC Demographic Report

The MPO Secretariat produces a Demographic Report that provides the Board with both the gender and ethnic breakdown of each of its citizen committees (**Appendix I-2**). This report is presented as a standing item on each MPO agenda. **Table 1** shows a close distribution between the African-Americans, Caucasians, and Hispanics for the CTAC.

### Citizens Interested in Serving on CTAC

Individuals interested in serving on the CTAC are handled by the Public Information Office (PIO). It is first determined what district the person lives in and if that Commissioner has a vacancy. If not, then at-large Representatives are identified and potential appointees are contacted. Meetings are then scheduled for the citizen to meet with their potential appointer. It is then up to the appointee to provide their credentials at the appointment.

### CTAC Minority Membership

*Objective: To increase minority representation on the CTAC, fill existing vacancies, and promote better citizen participation at CTAC meetings.*

The Demographic Report in **Table 1** shows

**Table 1: Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC)  
Demographic Report**

#	Description	Female		Male		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
1	African-American	5	16	4	13	9	29
2	Caucasian	1	3	11	34	12	37
3	Hispanic	0	0	10	31	10	31
4	Other	0	0	1	3	1	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

that Hispanic and African American representation on CTAC is almost at the same percentage with one another and with the Caucasian group.

### **Citizen E-mail Distribution Lists**

In an effort to promote better citizen participation, an email notification is sent to over 900 people through the MPO's Master Distribution and Public Involvement Citizen Distribution Lists. These lists include citizen, business, and MPO committee members, advising them of upcoming CTAC meetings.

### **CTAC Attendance Policy and Report**

Attendance is taken at every CTAC meeting. The attendance policy found in Section 9.01 of the CTAC By-Laws states the following:

*“Any Board member shall be automatically removed if, in a given fiscal year: (i) he or she is absent from two (2) consecutive meetings without an acceptable excuse; or, (ii) if he or she is absent from three (3) of the board's meetings without an acceptable excuse. A member shall be deemed absent from a meeting when he or she is not present at the meeting at least seventy-five (75) percent of the time. An “acceptable excuse” is defined as an absence for medical reasons, business reasons, personal reasons, or any other reason which the board, by a two-thirds vote of the membership, deems appropriate.”*

As shown in the Attendance Report (**Appendix I-3**), enforcement of the attendance policy has resulted in an increase in active member participation.

### **Public Comment at CTAC Meetings**

The public is invited to comment at CTAC meetings as one of the first items on the agenda (**Appendix I-4**). These efforts have shown a noticeable increase in citizen participation at CTAC meetings.

### **Citizen/MPO Board Member Appointment Schedule**

As stated above, the PIO has been scheduling meetings between interested CTAC candidates and respective MPO Board members. This facilitates the CTAC appointment process and has decreased the number of vacancies.

### **Advertisement Methods**

The PIO advertises CTAC meetings and vacancies through a variety of methods to engage members from disadvantaged and minority communities (**Appendix I-5**).

- *Community Events* - The PIO attends community outreach events in coordination with MPO Board members, South Florida Commuter Services, and local Universities. Information regarding MPO committees and vacancies is distributed at these events.
- *Print Media* - Committee vacancies and information regarding meetings and events are made available to the public through MPO quarterly and annual newsletters. Newsletters are translated from English into Spanish and Creole. Last year over 600,000 annual newsletters were distributed.
- *Radio Shows* - The MPO is working with the Miami-Dade County Communications Department and local English, Spanish, and Creole radio stations to produce a series of radio shows. By working with a variety of radio stations the MPO will reach the target audience, informing minority and disadvantaged communities on issues that affect them.

The PIO produced a radio show with the Haitian AM station, WRHB Radio Carnivale on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004. This broadcast was taped live and was translated from English to Creole. The show began with a brief introduction on the role of the MPO and discussed how citizens could get involved with CTAC.

- *Television Shows* - The MPO taped a television program, which aired on the Haitian Television Network (HTN) on February 8<sup>th</sup> 2004. The program was

taped in English and translated to Creole to provide transportation information to the Haitian community of Miami-Dade County. The broadcast featured an introduction on the MPO, MPO committee information, and ways to become involved including joining an MPO committee. Representative Phillip Brutus interviewed MPO project managers on transportation issues affecting the Haitian community.



*HTN Interview with Rep. Phillip Brutus  
(second from right)*

- *MPO Website* - The MPO has a comprehensive website that is updated weekly. The website contains a United Calendar of Events where MPO sponsored meetings have been combined. Meeting schedules are featured as an option on the MPO homepage on a single screen, rather than being featured separately.



*Radio Canivale Interview with Claudine Sada and  
Phares Poliard (left to right)*



## SECTION II: MPO DOCUMENTATION

### Public Involvement Documentation and Evaluation

*Goal: To develop better documentation efforts related to Title VI and to implement a mechanism to evaluate the MPO's public involvement activities.*

### Public Involvement Documentation

#### **MPO PI Database**

The MPO PI Database tracks all correspondence that comes into the MPO office. It contains an Agency List, a Citizen Request Section, and all Outreach Events.



- *Agency List* - consists of over 1,000 businesses and organizations that the PIO can draw from when organizing community outreach events.
- *Citizen Request Section* - documents all citizens' contact with the MPO, including but not limited to, phone calls, emails, faxes, and comment cards. This section includes the citizen's contact information, method of contact, and their concern. Each comment, concern, or question submitted to the MPO is reviewed and a letter is mailed to the citizen informing him or her that his or her request will be directed to the appropriate agency. The information is then directed to the agency where the appropriate action or response is then taken. Once the request leaves the

MPO, staff requests that the responsible agency copy their response so that it can then be entered into the database. This information can be queried and used to generate reports regarding the citizen's information if needed.

- *Community Outreach Events List* - Each event that an MPO staff member attends is entered into this database. Each entry includes the event title, location, contact information, and a brief evaluation of the success of the event. Individuals who provide an email address and this section serves as a form of documentation of MPO activities and is useful when planning and reflecting upon past outreach events.

### Public Involvement Evaluations

To assess existing and future PI activities, the MPO has begun to utilize evaluation methods to better gauge the level of success of its public involvement outreach and ensure compliance with federal agency regulations.

#### **General Outreach Evaluation**

In order to maintain up-to-date and effective General Outreach Strategies (GOSs), the MPO must continuously evaluate the effectiveness of PI strategies utilized in the transportation planning process. GOSs such as PI events, the Annual and Quarterly MPO newsletters, the MPO website, general information brochures, etc. require an evaluation approach that can be measured on a yearly basis. This annual evaluation assesses the effectiveness of the PI tools and tasks utilized by the MPO in meeting PI goals and objectives. The MPO has identified tools, tasks, and targets by which its PI program will be assessed (**Table 2** on page 6). Each year these tools, tasks, and targets are evaluated against performance indicators and performance targets by the process depicted in **Figure 1** on page 8. The establishment of indicators and targets indicates project progression and can help determine



deficiencies at an early stage in the project. Each year the MPO updates PI evaluation results using the General Outreach Evaluation Form found in **Appendix II-1**. At the end of the each year's implementation period, the previous years' targets are recognized as minimum targets. The results are documented and reviewed, and then project plans are modified accordingly.

The dynamic nature of the evaluation process requires that the MPO constantly pursue innovative GOSs that will engage the diverse citizenry of Miami-Dade County. The annual evaluation process identifies areas where improvement can be made, and enables the MPO to eliminate participation barriers and incorporate minority and low-income populations in the transportation decision making process.

***Special Project, Studies and Required Document Evaluations***

Each special project, study, and required document shall be evaluated by the Project Manager either on a yearly basis or at the completion of each project, whichever comes first, and shall meet the goals set by the Public Involvement Plan (PIP). PI development forms are provided to help expedite these evaluations in **Appendix II-2**. These forms, conformant to an effective and proactive PIP, should be considered early in the process to provide a valuable means in determining what PI strategies to apply from the beginning.

***Triennial Evaluation***

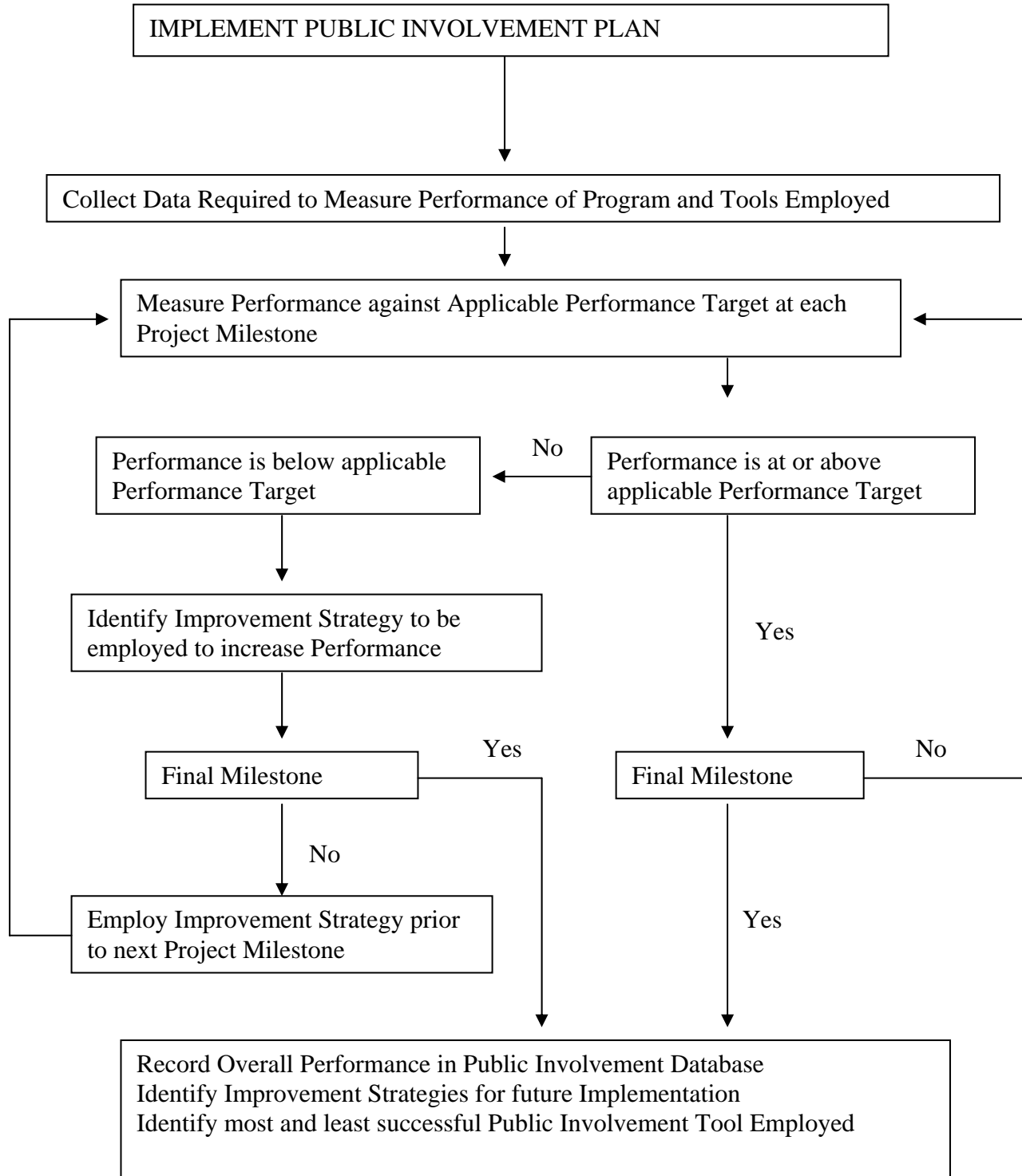
To comply with Florida Statute 339.175, the Miami-Dade MPO must be recertified every three years. Since project, study, and required document timelines do not necessarily concur with one another, a triennial self evaluation will be performed. This will allow the self evaluation of MPO programs and projects to coincide with the triennial MPO re-certification process. The recertification evaluation will follow Public Involvement Effectiveness Evaluation Program guidelines and will encompass the individual project specific evaluations performed within each three-year period. This evaluation will be conducted by an educational institute to avoid potential bias. Results will be presented at the triennial MPO recertification meeting and will be utilized to determine the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of applied PI strategies and where improvements can be made.

**Table 2: MPO Public Involvement Tools, Targets, and Tasks**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Description</b>
Community Outreach Events	Conduct Community Outreach Events	24 per Year	Coordinate with South Florida Commuter Services and the MPO Board Members to join their outreach events in the community
	Input information and evaluation of each event into MPO database.	100%	Track MPO outreach activities. Fill out community outreach event evaluation forms and input information from MPO employees into the database.
Quarterly Newsletters	Produce Quarterly Newsletters	4 per Year	Develop newsletter material to coincide with the “hot topic” of the quarter. Translate newsletter into Spanish and Creole.
Annual Newsletter	Produce and Distribute Annual Newsletter	Increase distribution by 2% Yearly	The newsletter should have a theme and have a year in review of various transportation initiatives. Translate the newsletter into Spanish and Creole.
	Citizen Comments Received	Increase by 1% Yearly	Input citizen comments into MPO Database and respond in a timely manner.
Public Service Announcements (PSAs)	Produce and Air PSAs	2 per Year	Work with MDTV and the local schools to produce PSA educating the public about the MPO and their transportation system. Air PSAs on Spanish and Creole TV stations.
Radio	Produce and Air MPO material on radio stations	2 per Year	Work with Miami-Dade County Communications Department and local English, Spanish, and Creole radio stations.

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Description</b>
MPO Database	Input comments into MPO Database	Increase by 10% Yearly	Track all correspondence that comes into the office.
	Track how comment was received	100%	Input how comment was received into database.
	Respond to comments	Maintain 1 week Response Rate	Take comment cards to outreach events and input information from the public into the database and respond in a timely manner.
Unified Calendar of Events	Maintain a calendar of events for all MPO activities.	Maintain Monthly Update	Create and update a unified calendar of events tracking all pertinent meetings (studies, projects, and MPO and citizen committees) of the MPO.
MPO Website	Maintain an up-to-date website.	Perform Weekly Update	Keep all information up-to-date.

**FIGURE 1: PROCESS FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT  
PLAN EVALUATION**



### **SECTION III: MPO CONTRACTS**

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#### Participation of Minority and Female Consultants

*Goal: To provide information to FHWA that demonstrates the participation of minority and female consultants in the contracting process.*

Currently the MPO uses the procedures established in the County to comply with Federal, State and local regulations. All Miami-Dade County certified minority and female consultants are solicited in the request for proposal process. The Department of Business and Economic Development's Review Committee must approve selection of any consultant. This committee ensures set aside goals are met.

Refer to Appendices C, D, and E of the Title VI Action Plan to view:

- MPO Request for Proposals Process
- Miami-Dade County Engineering, Architectural, Landscape Architecture and Surveying, and Mapping Professional Service Certification Process
- Certified Minority and Female Firms List provided by the Miami-Dade County Department of Business Development
- Miami-Dade County Affirmative Action Plan

## SECTION IV: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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### **Community Participation**

*Goal: To provide additional opportunities to the community to participate in the MPO programs and activities.*

In the year 2000, Miami-Dade County's population was approximately 2.253 million (Census, 2000). This number is expected to grow by 39% to almost three million residents by 2025 (LRTP, 2001). The County's large size, rapid growth rate and changing cultural dynamics must be considered when choosing the most appropriate outreach strategy to apply when performing General Outreach. The MPO considers this ever-changing environment when developing new and innovative public involvement strategies and techniques. After researching and reviewing previous outreach efforts from the Miami-Dade County MPO and other MPOs from around the country, the following best practices and public involvement tools have been adopted to reach out to Miami-Dade County's multicultural public:



### **Public Involvement Plan**

The MPO has developed a comprehensive Public Involvement Plan (PIP) that incorporates outreach initiatives for all office activities, including the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Unified Planning Work Program. The PIP is a stand alone, working document that will provide

the MPO with the tools, procedures, and structure needed to create, implement, and evaluate public involvement programs, projects, and required documents.

The PIP begins with a brief history pertaining to the foundation of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and then describes the creation and organizational structure of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Miami urbanized area in Dade County. The legal basis for the necessity of PI in state and national organizations is discussed followed by the implementation of PI strategies. This section explains useful key elements for creating a successful public involvement plan and the application of PI in the MPO's general outreach strategies, special projects, and required major planning documents. This document concludes with the evaluation methodology section, an explanation of PI processes and evaluations for the major planning documents, specific projects, and studies conducted by the MPO.

The PIP outlines a process that will allow the MPO to better assess the effectiveness of its outreach efforts, which will lead to the most appropriate application of public involvement strategies. In order to meet the needs of the dynamic metropolitan area it represents, the PIP requires continuous revision. This document was compiled utilizing previous studies performed by outside vendors contracted by the MPO, collaborative work and efforts from other departments such as Miami-Dade Transit, cooperative assistance from the MPO staff, as well as a careful review of the Prospectus and other relevant documents, websites, and federal, state and local regulations.

### **Citizen's Guide**

The MPO in collaboration with Florida International University developed a user-friendly pocket transportation guide for the County. This mini handbook is full of transportation information that is useful to both

residents and visitors. The Citizen's Guide will be mass distributed through public libraries, Team Metro, the MPO Governing Board, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau.

### ***Awareness, Needs, and Accessibility Project***

The Awareness, Needs, and Accessibility Project (Project ANA) is a method utilized by the PIO to ensure that the public is provided with an equal opportunity to participate in the planning process. The PIO strategically conducts Community Outreach Events (COEs) in a manner designed to target different sectors of the community. Project ANA's COEs have been classified into following four categories:

*Citizen Events* –The PIO collaborates with the MPO Governing Board to attend members' local events in each district. Examples include: Holiday in the Park, Toy Drives, Citizen Forums Health Fairs, etc. Attending citizen events is an extremely effective form of outreach that allows the MPO to reach out to the public and provide the PIO with valuable feedback, while simultaneously making the MPO member aware of his/her constituents' needs.



*Business Events*– The PIO coordinates with South Florida Commuter Services to visit businesses and attend various workshops to find out the transportation needs of the employers and employees.



*Student Events*– The PIO coordinates with Colleges and Universities throughout Miami-Dade County to speak with the student body during orientations or special events. The PIO officer then visits the campus and delivers a presentation that provides the students with information about

the MPO, informing them of the function and services the organization provides. The objective is to obtain feedback on how transportation can be improved and at the same time educate students about their transportation options.

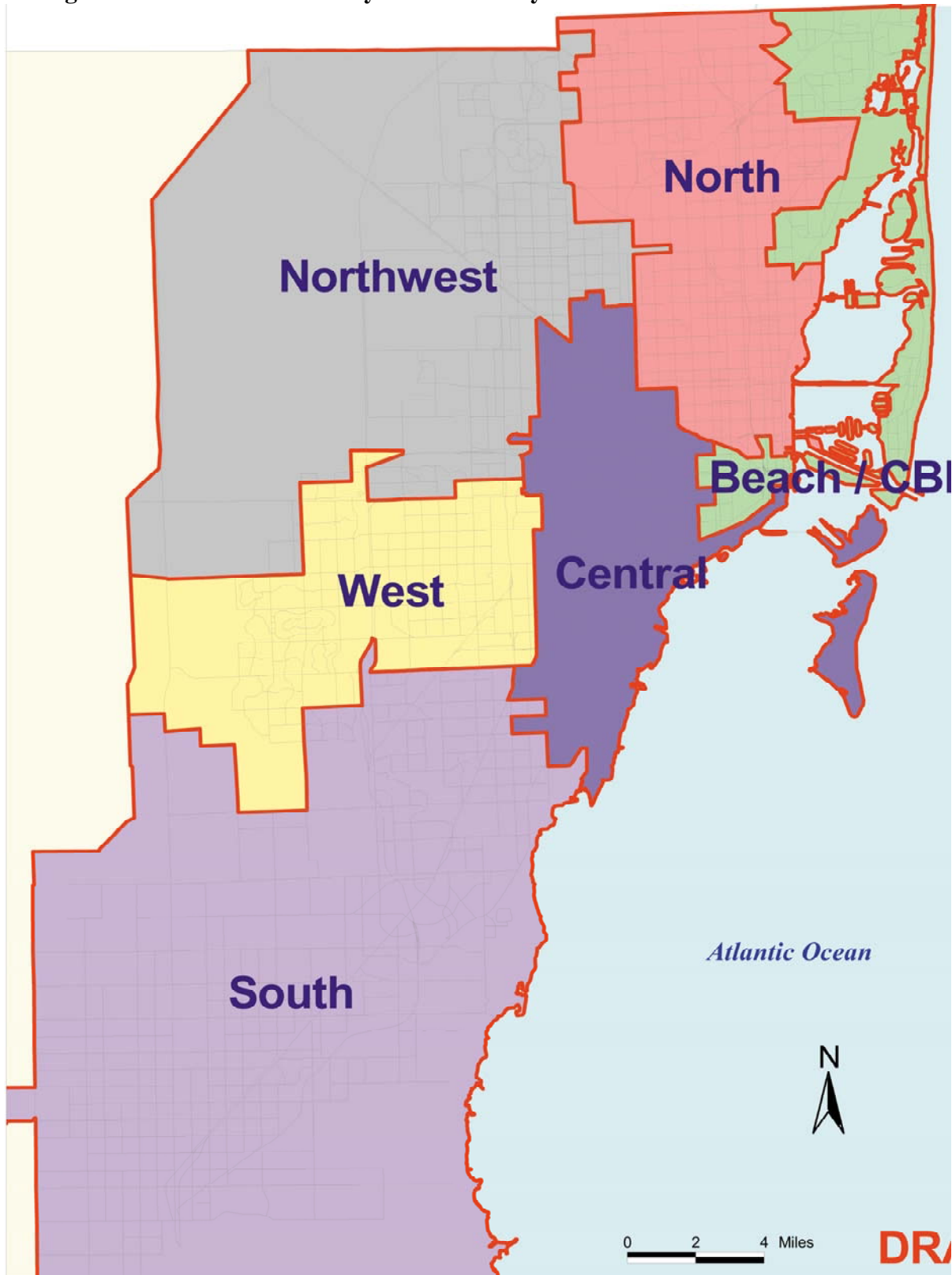
*Religious Events*– The PIO works with “The People Acting for Community Together” (PACT) to identify the transportation needs of church citizens and involve them in transportation decision-making process in their community. These events will allow the religious community to share transportation-related issues or concerns that may need to be addressed.

The PIO conducts COEs within the six planning areas that are scheduled in a manner that maximizes interagency cooperation and outreach potential (**Figure 2**). Each month two of the above categories are targeted with the intentions of performing twenty-four (24) COEs per year with four (4) COEs per planning area per year.

When possible, the PIO utilizes the MPO PI Database's Agency List (discussed in Section II). These events provide an opportunity for citizens to adequately provide transportation recommendations and comments to the PIO. Comment cards are made available to be filled out by participants at events with information being input into the MPO PI Database.



**Figure 2: Miami-Dade County Areas of Analysis**



### **Public Service Announcements**

Last year the MPO produced two thirty second long PSAs that were aired on MDTV Public Access Television in Spanish, Creole and English (**Appendix IV-1**). PSAs served as an introduction to the MPO and the services it provides for the County. They also provided viewers with contact information.



### **Bicycle Pedestrian Program**

The MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program strives to increase the number of people who bicycle and walk while reducing the number of traffic crashes that involve pedestrians and bicyclists. This program utilizes a variety of PI tools and strategies to inform Miami-Dade County citizens of alternative transportation options (**Appendix IV-2**). Through community outreach events, the Bicycle/Pedestrian Kiosk, and presentations to schools and local organizations useful safety information, maps, and future project plans are made available to the public.

### **Community Transportation Forum**

The Community Transportation Forum (CTF) is a committee comprised of Public Involvement Managers from transportation agencies in the Miami-Dade County (**Appendix IV-3**). Regular meetings are held to develop a means of communication and strengthen collaboration between state, local, and non-government transportation organizations. The goal of the CTF is to work together to develop countywide

public involvement initiatives that will be effective in reaching out to all County citizens, ensuring the participation of minority and low-income areas.

### **Tri County Public Involvement Management Team (PIMT)**

The three public involvement managers from Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach County have decided to work together to share ideas and create strategies to reach out to South Florida citizens. The goal of the PIMT is to develop a unified approach to outreach and develop effective strategies that can be implemented in each MPO's respective area.

### **Local Coordinating Board of Miami-Dade County**

The Local Coordinating Board was developed to identify local service needs and provide information, advice, and direction to the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) on the coordination of services to be provided to the transportation disadvantaged through the Florida Coordinated Transportation System.

### **Radio Shows**

The MPO is working with the Miami-Dade County Communications Department and local English, Spanish, and Creole radio stations to produce a series of radio shows. By working with a variety of radio stations the MPO will reach the target audience, informing minority and disadvantaged communities on issues that affect them.

The MPO produced a radio show with the Haitian AM station, WRHB Radio Carnivale on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004. This broadcast was taped live and was translated from English to Creole. The show began with a brief introduction on the role of the MPO and discussed the MPO's LRTP and how the Haitian community can become involved.

### Television Shows

The MPO was interviewed by Representative Phillip Brutus on the Haitian Television Network (HTN) on February 8<sup>th</sup> 2004. The show was taped in English and the hosts translated the information to Creole to provide transportation information to the Haitian community of Miami-Dade County. The broadcast featured an introduction on the MPO, MPO committee information, and ways to become involved in the planning process.

### MPO Website

The MPO has a comprehensive website that is updated weekly. The website houses information regarding the structure of the MPO, all MPO committees, activities, and projects as well as contact information.



*MPO Homepage*

### Unified Calendar of Events

All MPO sponsored meetings have been combined into one Unified Calendar of Events. Meeting schedules are featured as an option on the MPO homepage on a single screen, rather than being featured separately.

### Annual and Quarterly Reports

The MPO develops quarterly and annual newsletters that are published in English, Spanish, and Creole. Newsletters are created to inform the public about MPO activities, ongoing projects and provide them with information on how to become involved with the transportation planning process.

- *Quarterly Newsletter* - The quarterly newsletter material features a new “hot topic” each quarter and is distributed via the library system, Team Metro offices and the MPO Master Distribution and PI Citizen Distribution List, reaching over 600 households and businesses in the county.
- *Annual Newsletter* - The newsletter has a theme and a “Year in Review” section, including various transportation initiatives taken by the MPO’s transportation partners. Last year over 600,000 copies were mass distributed to Miami-Dade County citizens through the Miami Herald, El Nuevo Herald, Haiti En Marche, and other community newspapers.

### MPO Distribution List

The MPO Distribution List is an email database comprised of local businesses, MPO Board members, and citizen committee members. This list includes over 700 email addresses and is an effective means for distributing information.

### Student Outreach Strategies

To include Miami-Dade County’s student population in the transportation planning process, the PIO has initiated Project ANA, the 2004 Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest, and the Student Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC).

- To raise awareness among university students, as discussed above, Project ANA targets students at Miami-Dade

County Universities, specifically incoming freshman. PIO staff members work with local universities to include transportation information at freshman orientation sessions. This project's objective is to educate new students about their transportation options, receive feedback, and make using transport accessible and attractive.

- *Public Service Announcement Competition* - To utilize college students' unique perspective and artistic qualities, a Public Service Announcement (PSA) Competition in which the PIO works with university students around the county to create PSAs for the MPO has been implemented. PSAs will be aired in three languages English, Spanish, and Creole on Miami-Dade TV and various local TV stations. Currently, there are 30 students competing.
- *Student Transportation Advisory Committee* - The Student Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) will be an advisory committee that will reflect the diverse population of Miami-Dade County and provide a means to incorporate the youthful input of high school students into the transportation planning process. STAC will be comprised of one representative from each of the thirty-six public high schools. This group will inform the MPO of their concerns, issues, and opinions on transportation.

### **Required Work Documents Public Involvement**

*Objective: To establish specific public involvement programs for the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Unified Planning Work Program.*

#### **Unified Planning Work Program**

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) describes transportation planning

activities for the Miami Urbanized Area scheduled to be completed during each fiscal year or as determined by respective funding sources. The document outlines the planning projects that will support the comprehensive and multimodal Transportation Improvement Program approved for the metropolitan area in the Long Range Transportation Plan. The work outlined in the UPWP is to be undertaken in a cooperative manner between the various participating Miami-Dade County and regional agencies, municipalities and the Florida Department of Transportation. The UPWP also includes the Municipal Grant Program, whereby municipalities are granted funds to prepare relevant transportation planning studies. As a whole, the UPWP outlines planning projects that will assist in further defining the comprehensive and multimodal transportation plans for the area.

To comply with the Public Involvement process, Miami-Dade County municipalities are formally requested to review the UPWP prior to its adoption. The UPWP committee receives input from the community and provides equitable, accessible means for feedback through a "Call for Ideas", monthly meetings of the CTAC, and the participatory UPWP revision process (**Appendix IV-4**). A public hearing is held at the end of the revision process to provide all citizens of Miami-Dade County with ample opportunity to comment on the plan.

- *Call for Ideas* - The UPWP receives input from the community through the mass distribution of a "Call for Ideas" brochure and presentations to citizen committees. Each year, a "Call for Ideas" brochure is mailed to the MPO masterlist, presently comprised of over 721 citizens. A summary of ideas is compiled, and results are reviewed and ranked for funding by the UPWP development committee. Once revisions to the UPWP are made,

citizen committees review the draft. Both the UPWP and “Call for Ideas” brochure are posted on the web.

- *Presentation to MPO Board and Committees* - Preliminary drafts of the UPWP are presented to the MPO Board and the Transportation Planning Council (TPC), CTAC, and the Transportation Plan Technical Advisory Committee (TPTAC). Each committee is encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions are reviewed. Revisions to the document are made accordingly.
- *Public Hearing* - Once the draft document is approved by the committees; it is presented at the MPO Board meeting. The hearing is open to the public and is advertised in local English and Spanish newspapers.
- *Schedule of Events*- A schedule of UPWP activities can be found on the MPO website.

### **Long Range Transportation Plan**

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) has been developed to guide future transportation investments in Miami-Dade County. The plan assesses socioeconomic data, community demographics, and transportation trends to predict the county’s transportation needs for the next twenty to twenty-five years. It contains a list of reasonably feasible surface transportation projects contemplated for construction within the project period.



Each LRTP has a project cycle that lasts three years. The following list of strategies is employed throughout the LRTP process to maintain a proactive public outreach program that incorporates input from Miami-Dade County citizen and business communities:

- *Radio and Television shows* - The LRTP and how the community can get involved in the process is discussed during these shows.
- *Brochures* - A series of three trilingual promotional brochures are developed. Brochures are distributed to the public through community events and are displayed in county libraries and at the Government Center Information Kiosk.
  1. The first brochure was printed in November of 2003 and serves to promote the LRTP and introduce the plan to the public.
  2. The second brochure is developed and distributed halfway through the LRTP process in the second year of the cycle. It provides more detailed material including census data, traffic problem areas and possible solutions to traffic problems. This PI tool also invites the public to participate in the LRTP process and encourages feedback from the community.
  3. A third brochure will be developed towards the end of the cycle and serves as the executive summary. It is distributed once the plan is completed.
- *Community Workshop* - These workshops are held in accessible locations such as community libraries, school gymnasiums or are presented to neighborhood /homeowner associations. At the workshop presentations are made to citizen and professional groups focusing on area specific topics that affect their particular community. Workshops are



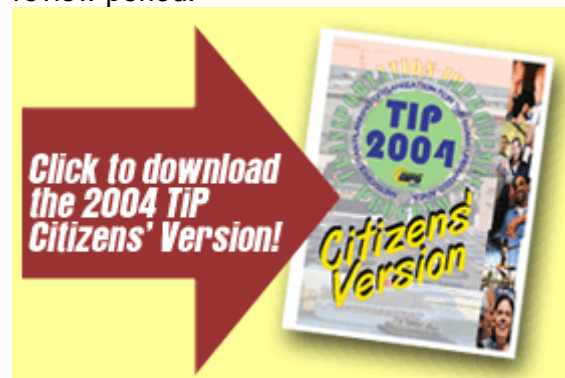
advertised at the grassroots level in local community and business newspapers such as *El Diario* and *Miami Today*. Feedback is collected through comment cards and public discussion. Suggestions are reviewed and incorporated where appropriate.

- *Presentation to MPO Board and Committees* - Preliminary drafts of the LRTP are presented to the MPO Board and the TPC, CTAC, and LRTP. Each committee is encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions are reviewed. Revisions to the document are made accordingly.
- *Public Hearing* - A public hearing will be held in the twentieth month of the LRTP cycle during an MPO Board meeting. The final draft of the document will be presented to citizens and the MPO Board. All MPO meetings are taped and broadcast on the Miami-Dade County Public Access Channel. Advertisement will begin five weeks prior to the hearing. A public notice will be placed in the newspaper and on the MPO website. MPO sponsored radio and television shows will also advertise the hearing. Print media, radio, and TV announcements will be made in English, Spanish, and Creole to ensure that all citizens of Miami-Dade County have access to this information.
- *Public Comment* - Two outreach events are conducted in a targeted commissioner's district each month, at which LRTP materials are displayed and distributed. Feedback from each community is collected through comment cards filled out by the citizens and is input into the MPO Public Involvement Database. To comply with the federal regulation's PI and notices, the LRTP allows a minimum of 45-days to include citizen responses and requests into the document.

A timeline and the frequency with which the previously mentioned activities will be carried out can be found in **Appendix IV-5**.

### ***Transportation Improvement Program***

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prioritizes transportation improvement projects for federal, state and local funding. The TIP puts the LRTP into action. It includes a prioritized listing of transportation improvement projects for the Miami-Dade County region within the next five fiscal years. It must also attempt to meet clean air standards (1990 Clean Air Act Amendments). The TIP not only lists specific projects, but also includes the anticipated schedule and cost for each project. Since the TIP is a dynamic document, projects may be added to meet changing priorities or to take advantage of a special opportunity. For this reason, the TIP may be changed after it is approved, and is amended in order to add, change or delete projects. Amendments to the TIP must undergo the same review and public outreach as the original TIP. The document undergoes a series of evaluations, and includes ample opportunity for public comment. Once compiled, review of the TIP begins and projects receive air quality and environmental justice analyses. During this period of time, there is a 30-day public review period.



As shown in **Appendix IV-6**, the TIP Development Schedule consists of a Work Program Public Hearing, TIP Program

Development Committee Meetings, and review and endorsement by the CTAC, TPTAC, and TPC. A final public hearing is held during an MPO Board meeting, all of which are televised and broadcast on Miami-Dade Public Access Television.

### ***Interactive Transportation Improvement Program***

Public Outreach and access to information is critical to the development of the TIP therefore, the MPO recently developed an Interactive Transportation Improvement Program (InteracTIP, **Appendix IV-7**). This innovative web-based technology was designed to automate the development of the TIP every year while at the same time: improving consistency; reformatting the book into a more user-friendly document; developing the ability to create special reports answering questions from the general public as well as public officials; facilitating the analysis of the report; and providing the public with access to information in a meaningful and easy-to-read format via the internet.

Information availability is critical to ensure that the public is able to participate effectively in the transportation planning process. The web-enabled application includes a section entitled "My Neighborhood" which houses the "Transportations Improvement" option that allows users to get a map or list of transportation projects near a specific location in the county. Project specific information can also be obtained by selecting a project the "Project Page" application.

InteracTIP provides citizens, the business community, and decision-makers with valuable information tool that will educate, engage, and make the public cognizant of the transportation projects affecting their communities.

### ***Public Involvement Activities***

In order to engage the diverse citizenry of Miami-Dade County in the TIP developmental process a variety of outreach strategies have been implemented in the past. Since the TIP dictates the manner in which projects are executed, final decisions can directly affect the public. Therefore, it is essential that the affected public is made aware and becomes involved in the TIP development process. The TIP committee recognizes the importance for PI and activities are carefully selected to appeal to the target audience. The following is a list of the most common PI tools utilized by the TIP committee:

- *Radio advertisements, segments and open mic sessions*
- *Distribution of flyers*
- *Newspaper ads and inserts*
- *Televised interactive meetings*
- *Neighborhood and community meetings*
- *Library distribution*
- *Workshops and various community group visitations and awareness sessions*

Some event specific examples include:

- *Overtown Festival Coordinating Efforts* - Initial efforts have been made to reach out to underprivileged communities during the public outreach efforts for the TIP. One notable event was in the Overtown Community (predominantly African American) at a community festival. The MPO provided extensive advertisement in newspapers that have substantial readership in Spanish, African-American and Haitian communities.
- *Interactive Meetings* - Each year a "citizen" hosted televised/interactive public hearing is held for the TIP. The next public hearing hosted by CTAC is scheduled for March 24, 2004. The



meetings are translated into Spanish and Creole air on Miami-Dade Public Access Television.

### **TIP Public Comments**

*Objective: To evaluate review time for public comment in the TIP development process.*

Once the document is compiled, review of the TIP begins and projects receive air quality and environmental justice analyses. During this period of time, there is a 30-day public review period.

The TIP is available online, hardcopies are available at the MPO office and the public can interact with the TIP through the InteracTIP. Citizen committees are informed of TIP proposals through presentations from TIP representatives at committee meetings. Citizens are able to submit amendments until the final call for drafts as shown in the TIP Development Schedule in **Appendix IV-7**. The public is also made aware of the TIP development process and upcoming projects through the outreach events, past activities are listed in the Public Involvement Activities books for the years of 2001-2004.

### **Public Involvement Staff**

*Objective: Additional staff resources for Public Involvement Section of MPO.*

#### **Additional Staff**

Additional staff resources have been allocated for the Public Involvement Office of the MPO. The **Public Involvement Officer** has been created to facilitate access to information throughout Miami-Dade County. In addition, a PI Intern has been employed each semester to help the PIO staff with their tasks. This has allowed the office to embark in new PI activities and more effectively and efficiently work with CTAC.

The MPO has assigned a designated person to be the **American Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator**. This person ensures all PI projects, programs and informational materials comply with the ADA and are accessible to persons with disabilities. The coordinator must attend quarterly meetings and disseminate relative information to fellow employees.

### **Training Courses**

To keep current with PI activities the PIO staff attends trainings and conferences.

- *PI Training* - The Public Involvement Manager (PIM) participated in a public involvement training class, "Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making" conducted by the National Transit Institute on March 5-7, 2002.
- *ADA Coordinator Training* - PIO staff attended the Americans with Disabilities National ADA Conference on October 20-23, 2003 conducted by The National Association of ADA Coordinators, an organization that provides access to the latest information and to the top people who develop and enforce ADA regulations.
- *CIA Training Event* - The PIM attended the Transportation Planning Capacity Building Peer-to-Peer Roundtable on Monday and Tuesday, September 8-9, 2003, in Indianapolis, IN. She was selected to participate as a panelist on the topic of "The Nuances of State DOT Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Guidance Creation" at the CIA Guidance Peer Roundtable. The goal of the session was to learn about varied approaches to creating and implementing State Department of Transportation (DOT) CIA Guidance and key challenges surrounding these processes as well as to brainstorm approaches to engrain CIA within State DOT transportation decision-making.

## SECTION V: MPO PUBLIC HEARINGS

### Increase Public Participation

*Goal: To increase public participation at public hearings.*

#### **Advertisement of Public Hearings**

The PIO advertises public hearings through the following variety of methods to make information accessible, and to engage members from disadvantaged and minority communities (**See Appendix V-1**):



- **Community Events** - Information regarding MPO committees and meeting dates, including public hearings, is distributed at these events.
- **Newsletters** - Information regarding meetings and events are made available to the public through MPO quarterly and annual newsletters. Newsletters are translated from English into Spanish and Creole.
- **Newspapers** - The MPO works closely with Miami-Dade Communications Department to provide extensive advertisement in the Miami Herald (broad based), Miami Times (predominantly African American readership), Community Newspapers (broad based), Haiti en Marche (Haitian readership), Diario de las

Americas (Hispanic readership) and Libre (Hispanic). Note: Advertisement in community newspapers has provided more of a grass-root method to reach the community.

- **Radio and Television Shows** - While working with a variety of radio and television stations, the MPO informs the audiences of any Public Hearings and meetings that will be taking place within the next couple of months.
- **MPO Website** - The MPO has a comprehensive website that is updated weekly. There is a section dedicated to MPO committees and contact information.
- **Unified Calendar of Events** - All MPO sponsored meetings have been combined into one Unified Calendar of Events. Meeting schedules are featured as an option on the MPO homepage on a single screen, rather than being featured separately.

#### **Accessible meeting times**

All CTAC meetings are held at 5:00 PM to enable working citizens to attend. In addition, public hearings hosted by CTAC for TIP Interactive meetings are scheduled at 6:00 PM. The objective is to encourage greater participation of citizens into the TIP development process and has resulted in an increase in citizen attendance at hearings.

#### **Public Comment at Public Hearings**

The public is invited to comment in all MPO Board and committee meetings as one of the first items on the agenda. These efforts have shown a noticeable increase in citizen participation at public hearings.

## SECTION VI: SOCIOCULTURAL EFFECTS

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### **Sociocultural Effects Strategies and Techniques**

*Goal: To implement Sociocultural Effects strategies and techniques into the MPO planning process.*

#### **Community Characteristics Program**

The Community Characteristics Program (CCP) is a tool that enables the PIO to review the social, economic, and geographic characteristics of an area before PI outreach is initiated. This tool enables the PIO to identify the attitudes and issues facing a community, facilitating PIO efforts to conduct more effective outreach and accomplish stated Title VI goals.

The CCP will comply with the FDOT suggestion that buffers of 100 feet, 200 feet, 500 feet, and one mile be utilized when analyzing the potential effects of a project on the surrounding community. PI strategies are then modified according to community characteristics, such as literacy rates, income levels, cultural composition, and religious affiliation. For example, if an area has a low literacy rate, it would be more effective to use audio and visual aids rather than to distribute brochures, handouts, and other reading materials. By utilizing the CCP, the PIO has access to this important information beforehand to tailor its PI outreach approach accordingly. By conducting more efficient and efficacious outreach, the MPO will also receive quality feedback from the public. This will engage citizens in the planning process and provide planners with valuable information that can be incorporated into specific projects and required work documents.

The CCP's information is gathered primarily through Geographic Information

System (GIS) Technology. Primary and Secondary GIS layers that have been determined necessary for the evaluation of Sociocultural Effects by the FDOT in the accomplishing Sociocultural Effects Evaluations within the ETDM Process Report has been reviewed and utilized in the creation of the CCP.

As stated, the main purpose of this program is to produce a report detailing the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of a particular area surrounding a transportation project. So, what happens when the report is produced? How is the user supposed to use it?

To utilize these reports to their full potential, "Fact Sheets" containing scenarios of which PI strategies to utilize for a particular type of neighborhood characteristic will be made available on the site as downloadable PDF files. These documents will include researched public involvement (PI) Best Practices utilized around the country along with case studies detailing how certain PI strategies have been implemented for particular neighborhood characteristics.

The user can view their particular community's characteristics on the original report and print out the applicable Fact Sheets that correspond with those characteristics. The user can then combine the Fact Sheets and create a customized PI program to reach out into that community. This will enable the user to best utilize the resources he/she currently has to perform the most efficient and effective outreach possible to ensure participation from the community.

## **SECTION VII: MPO SERVICE EQUITY**

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### **Distribution of Benefits and Impacts**

*Goal: To address the distribution of benefits and impacts of the transportation investment program.*

The first phase of the CCP (discussed in Section VI) has already been executed and is available via internet for use by public involvement managers and transportation planners. This tool serves as a methodology to evaluate social equity for the Long Range Transportation Plan and is thoroughly described in Section VI. One of the goals of the CCP was to address Environmental Justice and Title VI when developing project proposals. It also enables planning agencies to evaluate public participation in the implementation of projects in minority and low-income areas; measure the positive and negative impacts of the transportation plan in these communities; and collect feedback for future analyses.