Emerald Coast Regional Council
Regional Rural Transportation Program
Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda

The Chautauqua Hall
95 Circle Dr, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435
Wednesday, November 18, 2026 – 2:00 p.m.

GoToWebinar:
https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3385856356094915674

Call To Order
Welcome and Introductions – Latilda Hughes-Neel, Chair

ACTION

1. **Rural Transportation Plan (RTP) Minor Update**
   Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff

FDOT Update, *Tanya Branton, FDOT*

PRESENTATIONS

2. **Approval of the August 27, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
   No Presentation
3. **Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)**
   Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff and Tanya Branton, FDOT
4. **SS4A Annual Report**
   Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff

ADJOURNMENT

El público está invitado a participar, sin distinción de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, edad, religión, discapacidad o estado familiar. En acuerdo con el American with Disabilities Act, se harán arreglos razonables para el acceso a la reunión. Si su idioma principal no es inglés, en acuerdo con Title VI, usted puede pedir el servicio de un intérprete. Para pedir asistencia, comuníquese con Ada Rivera Clark, por carta electrónica al ada.clark@erc.org, por teléfono llame al 850-332-7976, ext. 227 o puede llamar al 1-800-955-8771, para TTY-Florida. Por favor póngase en contacto con 48 horas de antemano.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or family status. Reasonable accommodations for access will be made in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and for languages other than English. Please notify ECRC Public Involvement of any special requirements or requests at publicinvolvement@ecrc.org or email Leandra Meredith at Leandra.Meredith@ecrc.org. You may also call 1-800-226-8914, ext. 203 or 1-800-955-8771 for TTY-Florida. All requests should be made at least 48 hours in advance.

Agenda Item 1

Agenda Item Number: 1

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution ECRC 2026-14, Approval of the Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update

BACKGROUND: In February 2021, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) began a contractual services agreement to develop the first Regional Rural Transportation Plan for the seven counties served by ECRC. ECRC provides staff support to the Florida-Alabama, Okaloosa-Walton, and Bay County Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs). The Bay County TPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary includes all of Bay County, while the Florida-Alabama and Okaloosa-Walton TPO MPA boundaries extend through approximately the southern half of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties. The remaining non-MPA areas of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties, along with all of Holmes and Washington counties, make up the Rural Study Area for the Rural Transportation Plan.

A full update to the Rural Transportation Plan is scheduled to begin in 2027. In the meantime, interim updates to the projects included in the plan are needed. The proposed schedule for this minor update is outlined below:

- August 27, 2026: Officially open the minor update process
- October 22, 2026: Virtual workshop
- November 18, 2026: RRTP TAC to consider recommending approval of the minor update
- November 18, 2026: ECRC Board to consider approval of the minor update

The RRTP can be viewed at www.ecrc.org/RRTP.

ATTACHED:

- Resolution ECRC 2026-14

RECOMMENDED ACTION: A motion recommending the ECRC chair sign Resolution ECRC 2026-14, approving and adopting the Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update. Contact Gary Kramer, ECRC staff, at gary.kramer@ecrc.org or 850-332-7976 ext. 219 if additional information is needed.

RESOLUTION ECRC 2026-14
A RESOLUTION OF THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL TO APPROVING THE MINOR UPDATE OF THE RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) is the designated Regional Transportation Area to serve the regional needs of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Washington, and Holmes counties; and

WHEREAS, in its role as the Regional Transportation Area, ECRC has assumed the role of creating a Regional Rural Transportation Plan, which commenced on February 1, 2021 through a contractual services agreement with FDOT; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Rural Transportation Plan was adopted by ECRC on February 8, 2023; and

WHEREAS, public outreach efforts included presentations, email blasts, and a public workshop on October 22, 2026;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Emerald Coast Regional Council that

The ECRC approves the Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update.

Duly passed and adopted by the Emerald Coast Regional Council on this 18th day of November 2026.

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

BY: _____
Kurvin Qualls, Chair

ATTEST: _____
Kandase Lee, ECRC Chief Executive Officer

Agenda Item 2

Regional Rural Transportation
Advisory Committee Meeting Summary
The Chautauqua Building
95 Circle Dr, DeFuniak Springs, FL / GoToWebinar
August 27, 2026; 9:30am

Attendance

Joseph Allday, Alday-Howell Engineering (Virtual)
Scott Bitterman, Okaloosa County
Andy Fleener, Washington County (Virtual)
Cassidy Haney, FDEP
Latilda Hughes-Neel, Chair City of Freeport
Alex Hutton, Alday-Howell Engineering
Cliff Johnson, Bay County (Virtual)
Dave Murzin, Town of Century
Max Rogers, Vice Chair Santa Rosa County
Patrice Tanner, City of Chipley (Virtual)
Carol Underwood, Washington County (Virtual)
Chris Wallace, City of DeFuniak Springs

ECRC Staff in Attendance:

Tiffany Bates
Rae Emary
Karen Harrell (Virtual)
Gary Kramer (Virtual)
Kandase Lee
Leandra Meredith
Tammy Neal
Jill Nobles

Call to Order

Welcome and Introductions:

Chair Hughes-Neel welcomed those in attendance and introductions were made.

PUBLIC FORUM

Chair Hughes-Neel opened the public forum. With no speakers or comments from the public, the public forum was closed.

PRESENTATIONS:

Item 1: Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update

Jill Nobles presented a minor update to the Rural Regional Transportation Plan that was first developed in 2021 by FDOT and ECRC and adopted in February of 2023. The plan covers the Rural Study Area while a full major update is scheduled to begin in 2027 for adoption in early 2028. The current update reflects a shift to seven project ranking categories, with Transportation Alternatives (TA), and administrative changes including removing seven resurfacing projects that were funded or completed, adding one freight project, and revising one safety project.

Ms. Nobles stated the minor update process opened August 27, 2026, with public outreach planned for September-October 2026 and approval by the RRTP TAC and ECRC Board scheduled for November 2026.

Item 2: FDOT & FDEP Update:
Cassidy Haney, FDEP Office of Greenways & Trails Coordinator, announced an update to the FDEP System Plan, which will allow local jurisdictions to nominate existing trails for inclusion in the priority network; once

Ms. Haney announced a fall system plan update allowing local jurisdictions to nominate existing trails for the priority network. Trails approved for inclusion become eligible for enhancement funding. She also highlighted the U.S. 1912 Corridor Alliance, a 17-county effort to close gaps in the state's longest multi-use trail, spanning over 130 miles, and invited stakeholders to join its email list and web community.

No questions or comments were received.

ACTION ITEMS:

Item 3: Approval of the May 20, 2026 Meeting Minutes
Chair Hughes-Neel asked for a recommendation on the May 20, 2026 meeting minutes.

Dave Murzin recommended approval of the May 20, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Rogers and was unanimously approved.

Item 3: Regional Rural Transportation Program (RRTP) Public Participation Plan
Jill Nobles presented the updated draft Regional Rural Transportation Program (RRTP) Public Participation Plan, and explained the update includes revisions to reflect the RRTP's established brand identity, incorporation of additional planning strategies developed since adoption of the original plan, and general administrative updates including staff changes, contact information, and organizational details.

Ms. Nobles asked TAC members to review the projects on the RRTP webpage's interactive map and recommend any changes. If any changes are recommended, those will be presented to the Board for approval and adoption at its November 2026 meeting.

Chris Wallace recommended approval of the Regional Rural Transportation Program (RRTP) Public Participation Plan. The motion was seconded by Scott Bitterman and was unanimously approved.

Information Items:

a. Wildlife Corridor Access Improvement Grant (NOFO)
b. US 90 Trail PD&E Study Handout (Walton County)
c. Construction Contingency Procedure

Adjournment: With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 9:48am.

Agenda Item 3

Agenda Item Number: 3

SUBJECT: Presentation of the FDOT District Three Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program and the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)

BACKGROUND: FDOT District Three (D-3) is scheduled to announce the upcoming Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) application cycles for FY 2028 – FY 2033 Tentative Work Program.

Transportation Alternatives (TA)

The TA Set-Aside is intended to fund a variety of small-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity. **Transportation Alternatives Program (fdot.gov)**

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside provides funding for programs and projects consistent with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These set-aside funds include all projects and activities defined as TA: on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation, community improvement activities, environmental mitigation, and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of formerly divided highways.

Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)

The Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) was created as part of major growth management legislation enacted during the 2005 Legislative Session (SB 360). The purpose of the program is to encourage regional planning by providing state matching funds for improvements to regionally significant transportation facilities identified and prioritized by regional partners.

As the Regional Transportation Planning Organization, ECRC ranks and prioritizes all TRIP applications in the ECRC region. ECRC TRIP Criteria can be found at the following link: https://www.ecrc.org/programs/transportation_planning/northwest_florida_regional_tpo/plans_and_documents.php in the dropdown menu located on the bottom of the page.

Schedule

- Monday, November 2, 2026: TA and TRIP application solicitation starts.
- Wednesday, November 18, 2026 at 2:00 pm: **ECRC – Regional Rural Transportation Plan – Technical Advisory Committee** https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3385856356094915674, also at Chautauqua Hall in DeFuniak Springs, FL.
- Monday, December 7, 2026 at 10:30 am: **Florida-Alabama TPO** TA & TRIP Informational Workshop https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2832291833928134743
- Monday, December 7, 2026 at 1:00 pm: **Okaloosa-Walton TPO** TA & TRIP Informational Workshop https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2734759654986342492
- Monday, December 7, 2026 at 3:00 pm: **Bay County TPO** TA & TRIP Informational Workshop https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3598181947023074393
- https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4475831912047651930
- Friday, January 15, 2027: TA and TRIP applications are due in FDOT's Grant Application Program (GAP)

ATTACHED:

- FDOT TA & TRIP Flyers

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This is an information only item. Contact Jill Nobles, Planner, ECRC at jill.nobles@ecrc.org or 850-332-7976 ext. 212 or Tanya Branton, FDOT staff, at Tanya.Branton@dot.state.fl.us.

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA)

What is the TA Program?

The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) Program was established by Congress to support small-scale transportation projects that enhance communities and promote alternative travel. Eligible projects include:

- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Recreational trails
- Community improvements (historic preservation, vegetation management)
- Environmental mitigation (stormwater, habitat connectivity)

New This Year:

A Local Funds Construction Contingency (LFCC) must be included in all LAP construction phase project estimates. The amount must be the greater of 0.5% of the contract value or $10,000. This requirement applies in the year the project is scheduled to be let.

Who is Eligible?

- Local governments
- Regional transportation authorities
- Transit agencies
- Non-profit entities
- Other eligible organizations



How to Apply:

Applications and forms can be found on the Florida Grant Application Program (GAP) at **www.flgap.com**. You may request credentials by clicking the link at the bottom of the webpage that says, “Request User Access” or contact Tanya Sanders Branton at the information below.

Contact Information:
Tanya Sanders Branton
District 3 TRIP/TA Coordinator

850.330.1550

Tanya.Branton@dot.state.fl.us

FDOT TA Program Information Northwest Florida Planning Resources

Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)

What is TRIP?

The Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) was created in 2005 (SB 360) to encourage regional planning. It provides state matching funds of up to 50% for improvements to regionally significant transportation facilities identified and prioritized by regional partners.

Who is eligible?

- Two or more contiguous MPOs
- One or more MPOs with one or more contiguous counties not in an MPO
- A multi-county regional transportation authority created by law
- Two or more contiguous counties not in an MPO
- MPOs comprised of three or more counties

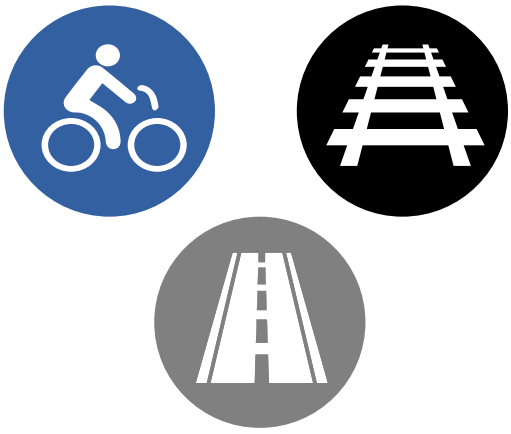
How to Apply:

Applications and forms can be found on the Florida Grant Application Program (GAP) at **www.flgap.com**.

You may request credentials by clicking the link at the bottom of the webpage that says, “Request User Access” or contact Tanya Sanders Branton at the information below.

Key Benefits:

- ✓ Encourages collaboration across regions
- ✓ Provides matching state funds
- ✓ Improves significant transportation facilities
- ✓ Supports growth management and regional mobility



Contact Information:

Tanya Sanders Branton
District 3 TRIP/TA Coordinator
850.330.1550
Tanya.Branton@dot.state.fl.us

FDOT TRIP Program Information
Northwest Florida Planning Resources

Agenda Item 4

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Agenda Item Number: 4

SUBJECT: Emerald Coast Safety Action Plan Annual Report

BACKGROUND: The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the new SS4A discretionary program, with $5 billion in appropriated funds over 5 years, 2022-2026. The SS4A program funds regional, local, and tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. As a recipient of an SS4A grant, ECRC produced a Safety Action Plan. The Safety Action Plan will assist the ECRC and the TPO regions in achieving the target of zero fatalities and serious injuries.

The Emerald Coast Safety Action Plan was adopted on December 12, 2024. In dedication to the implementation of the safety projects identified in this plan, it is important to continue monitoring progress toward reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries. Yearly reporting will help determine which projects are effective in reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries. The Safety Action Plan and Annual Report are published on the ECRC project website at: https://www.ecrc.org/programs/transportation_planning/transportationsafety_initiatives.php.

ATTACHED:

- Draft SS4A Annual Report

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This item is for information only. Please contact Jill Nobles, ECRC staff, at 850-332-7976, Ext. 212 or jill.nobles@ecrc.org if additional information is needed.

2026 EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

SAFE STREETS FOR ALL
AN ECRC 2.0 INITIATIVE

DRAFT

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	Escambia		Santa Rosa		Okaloosa		Walton		Bay		Washington		Holmes		ECRC	
	2024	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*
Total fatalities	60	62	26	19	19	23	24	19	36	23	9	6	6	4	180	156
Fatality rate	1.51	1.54	1.09	0.77	0.78	0.87	1.40	1.06	1.63	1.00	1.26	0.82	1.21	0.79	1.29	1.08
Total serious injuries	230	188	104	70	125	115	63	61	156	220	30	31	38	39	748	724
Serious injury rate	5.78	4.68	4.38	2.85	5.14	4.36	3.68	3.41	7.06	9.60	4.19	4.23	7.65	7.71	5.37	5.02
Number of pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries on all roads	32	31	11	3	11	10	5	4	21	22	1	0	2	2	83	72
Number of bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries on all roads	13	24	4	7	8	12	4	6	22	17	0	0	0	0	51	66
Number of safety projects constructed on HIN	5	0	0	0	3	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	3
Number of implemented safety improvements in prior calendar year	7	1	3	1	7	7	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	22	9

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS IMPLEMENTED ON THE **HIGH INJURY NETWORK (HIN)**

NICEVILLE

- **Palm Blvd (from 27th St to Bayshore Dr)**
  Multi-use path
- **Bayshore Dr**
  800' of sidewalk

BAY COUNTY

- **CR 2337 Sherman Avenue at SR 30A/US 98/15th Street**
  Intersection improvements

OTHER SAFETY PROJECTS **NOT** ON HIGH INJURY NETWORK (HIN)

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- **Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Upgrade Project**
  Lanier Drive (from Creighton Road to Toni Street)

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

- **SR 30 (US 98) Navarre Parkway @ Sunrise Drive**
  Traffic signal update, upgraded span wire signal to mast arm, install reflective back plate, and provide left turn phases.

DESTIN

- **Beach Drive at Mountain Drive**
  Added crosswalks and pedestrian activated rapid flashing beacons across Beach Drive
- **Gulf Shore Drive**
  Installation of rapid flashing beacons where road lanes reduce
- **Gulf Shore Drive at Durango Road**
  Installation of rapid flashing beacons

FORT WALTON BEACH

- **Beal Pkwy SW at First St SW**
  Installation of flex posts to prevent left turns onto Beal Pkwy

NICEVILLE

- **Bailey Dr. (from Highway 20 to 27th St)** Sidewalk
- **Valparaiso Blvd** New sidewalk installation *Partnership with Okaloosa County.
- **Updated the school striping around Plew Elementary**

DRAFT

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

LEARN MORE ABOUT SAFETY ACTION PLAN
WWW.ECRC.ORG/TRANSPORTATIONSAFETY