



# NWFTCA Overview

- Created by the 2005 Florida Legislature (343.80, Florida Statutes)
- One of several transportation authorities in Florida
- Includes 8 Counties (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Walton, Okaloosa, Bay, Gulf, Franklin & Wakulla)
- Each of the 8 Voting Board Members represents one of the 8 counties
- FDOT is an ex-officio, non-voting member



# NWFTCA Purposes and Powers

- The primary purpose of the NWFTCA is to:
  - develop Master Plan by July 1, 2007
  - improve mobility on the US 98 corridor
  - enhance traveler safety
  - identify and develop hurricane evacuation routes
  - promote economic development along the corridor
  - implement transportation projects to alleviate current or anticipated traffic congestion
  - build private and public partnerships
  - Identify projects that will accomplish these purposes



# NWFTCA Authorized Actions

- Construct any feeder roads, reliever roads, connector roads, bypasses, or appurtenant facilities that are intended to improve mobility along the US 98 corridor
- Plan, design, finance, and construct transportation improvement projects
- Acquire and hold title to property that will accommodate the development of transportation facilities
- Seek financial assistance from local, State and Federal government as well as private entities
- Implement toll facilities to aid in funding projects



# Master Plan Phase I

- Completed by FDOT in April, 2006
- Documented existing conditions and identified transportation projects recently completed, under study, or in the process of design, right-of-way acquisition or construction
- Served as the baseline condition for the NWFTCA's Master Plan



# Master Plan Phase II

- Develop Overall Vision (Goals & Objectives)
- Assess Existing Conditions (No-build/Do Nothing)
- Identify Improvement Opportunities
- Determine What Needs To Be Done
- Identify Projects & Constraints
- Develop Preliminary Costs
- Identify Finance Options/Availability
- Prioritize Projects





# Goals & Objectives

- **GOAL A:** Improve the mobility of people and goods throughout the US 98 corridor area
- **GOAL B:** Enhance traffic safety along the US 98 corridor for all modes of travel
- **GOAL C:** Reduce hurricane evacuation clearance times on US 98 and designated routes connecting with US 98



# Goals & Objectives

- **GOAL D:** Identify transportation strategies that enhance the region's economic development potential
- **GOAL E:** Build partnerships with key stakeholders throughout the region in formulating transportation alternatives for the US 98 corridor
- **GOAL F:** Identify projects along with finance strategies for implementation





# Development of Alternatives

- Consideration of the following factors:
  - Study Goals and Objectives
  - Existing traffic/Level of Service (LOS)/congestion
  - Forecasted 2030 traffic/LOS/congestion
  - Transportation Planning Organization/Transportation Planning Area (TPO/TPA) Transportation Improvement Programs
  - TPO/TPA Long-Range Transportation Plans
  - FDOT/Florida Transportation Commission (FTC) New Corridors Initiative



# Draft Alternatives Development

- Consideration of Five Alternatives:
  - No-Build alternative and four Build alternatives
- No-build Alternative
  - Included projects with construction funding commitments in the next five years
- Build Alternative 1
  - Add new lanes to existing US 98
  - Grade separated interchanges at critical intersections



# Draft Alternatives Development

- Build Alternative 2
  - Add new lanes to existing US 98
  - Add bypass routes around the urban areas of US 98
  - Add new 2-lane roadway through Gulf, Franklin and Wakulla Counties
- Build Alternative 3
  - Add new lanes to US 98
  - Add bypass routes around the urban areas of US 98
  - Add two new highway corridors connecting to Alabama



# Draft Alternatives Development

- Build Alternative 4
  - Add new limited access expressway from Wakulla County to Santa Rosa County
  - Add two new highway corridors connecting to Alabama
  - Add bypass around Pensacola
  - Add new Apalachicola Bridge
  - Add connection to the Red Hills – Coastal Parkway



# Public Involvement

- The NWFTCA has held 22 monthly meetings since its inception in September, 2005 and public participation has been encouraged at each meeting
- Pursuant to Florida Statutes, the meeting locations have alternated between the following counties:
  - Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Gulf, Franklin, and Walkulla



# Public Involvement - continued

- The NWFTCA monthly meetings:
  - September 2, 2005
  - October 14, 2005
  - November 21, 2005
  - December 15, 2005
  - January 19, 2006
  - January 27, 2006
  - February 16, 2006
  - March 2, 2006
  - March 16, 2006
  - April 20, 2006
  - May 18, 2006
  - June 15, 2006
  - July 20, 2006
  - August 17, 2006
  - September 21, 2006
  - October 19, 2006
  - November 16, 2006
  - December 21, 2006
  - January 18, 2007
  - February 15, 2007
  - March 15, 2007
  - April 5, 2007





# Public Involvement - continued

- Notice of the NWFTCA's meetings have been advertised in the Tallahassee Democrat, Panama City News Herald, Pensacola News Journal, The Port St. Joe Star, Northwest Florida Daily News (Ft. Walton), via the internet and distribution of public notice
- A special public meeting was held in Tallahassee at FDOT



# Public Involvement - continued

- The NWFTCA received public input on the Five Alternatives in other forums, including:
  - February 20<sup>th</sup>, Wakulla County workshop
  - February 21<sup>st</sup>, Bay County workshop
  - February 26<sup>th</sup>, Escambia County workshop
  - March 1<sup>st</sup>, Okaloosa County workshop
  - NWFTCA website public comment portal
  - Written comments
  - Phone calls and emails



# Final Master Plan

- NWFTCA considered FDOT plans, Transportation Planning Organization plans, special district plans, local and regional plans, engineering data and analysis, governmental agencies' input, and citizens' comments into consideration in developing the Final Master Plan
- The Final Master Plan is a combination of projects from the proposed alternatives presented at the public workshops
- Plan was adopted by the NWFTCA on April 5, 2007



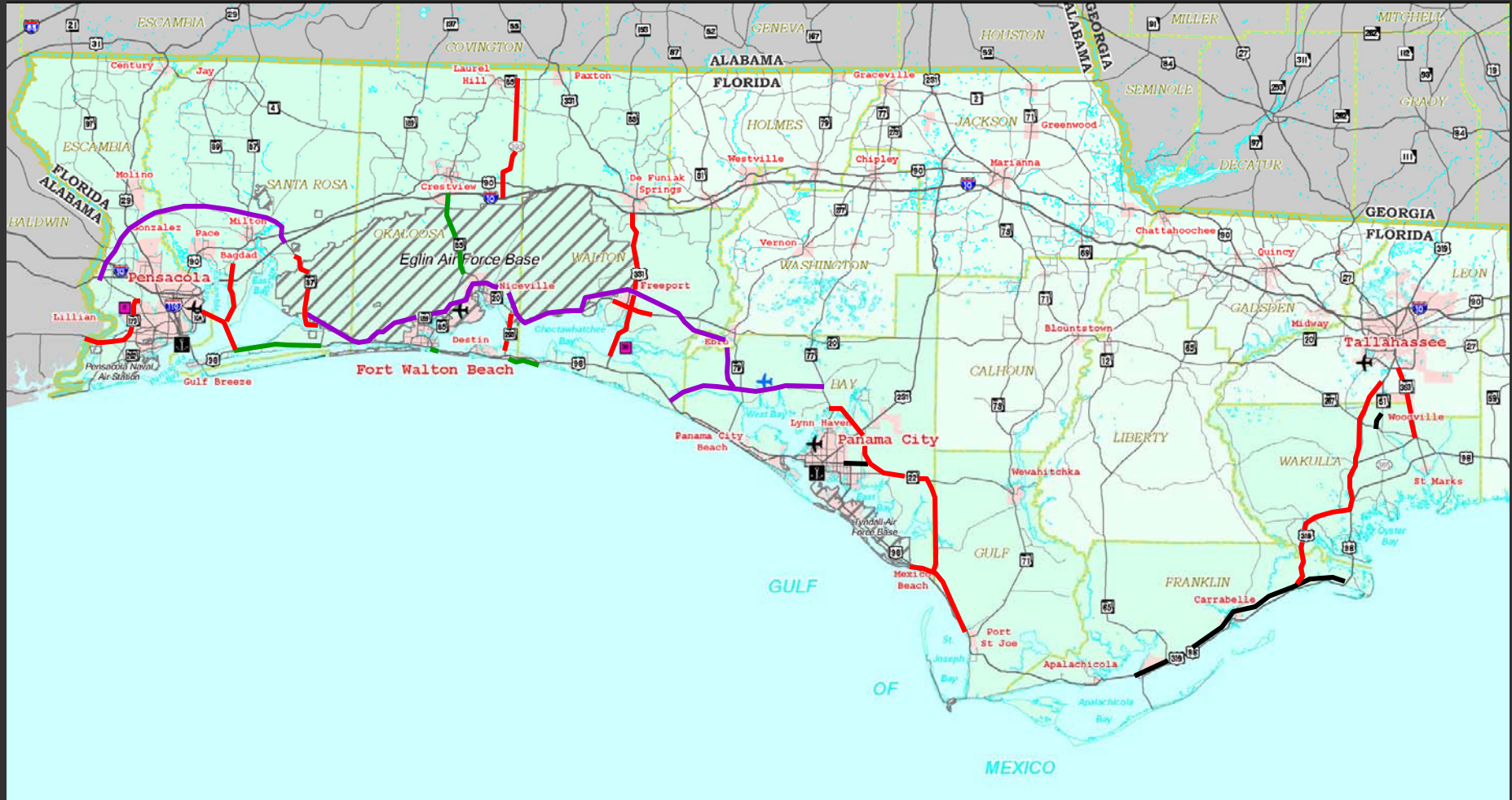
# Final Master Plan

- NWFTCA is mandated to update and revise the Master Plan on an annual basis pursuant to Section 343.80, Florida Statutes
- The Master Plan is for planning purposes
- Proposed corridor lines on the Master Plan are conceptual in nature and reflect possible future corridor locations which are subject to future review and analysis and are not intended to reflect the actual location of future roadways



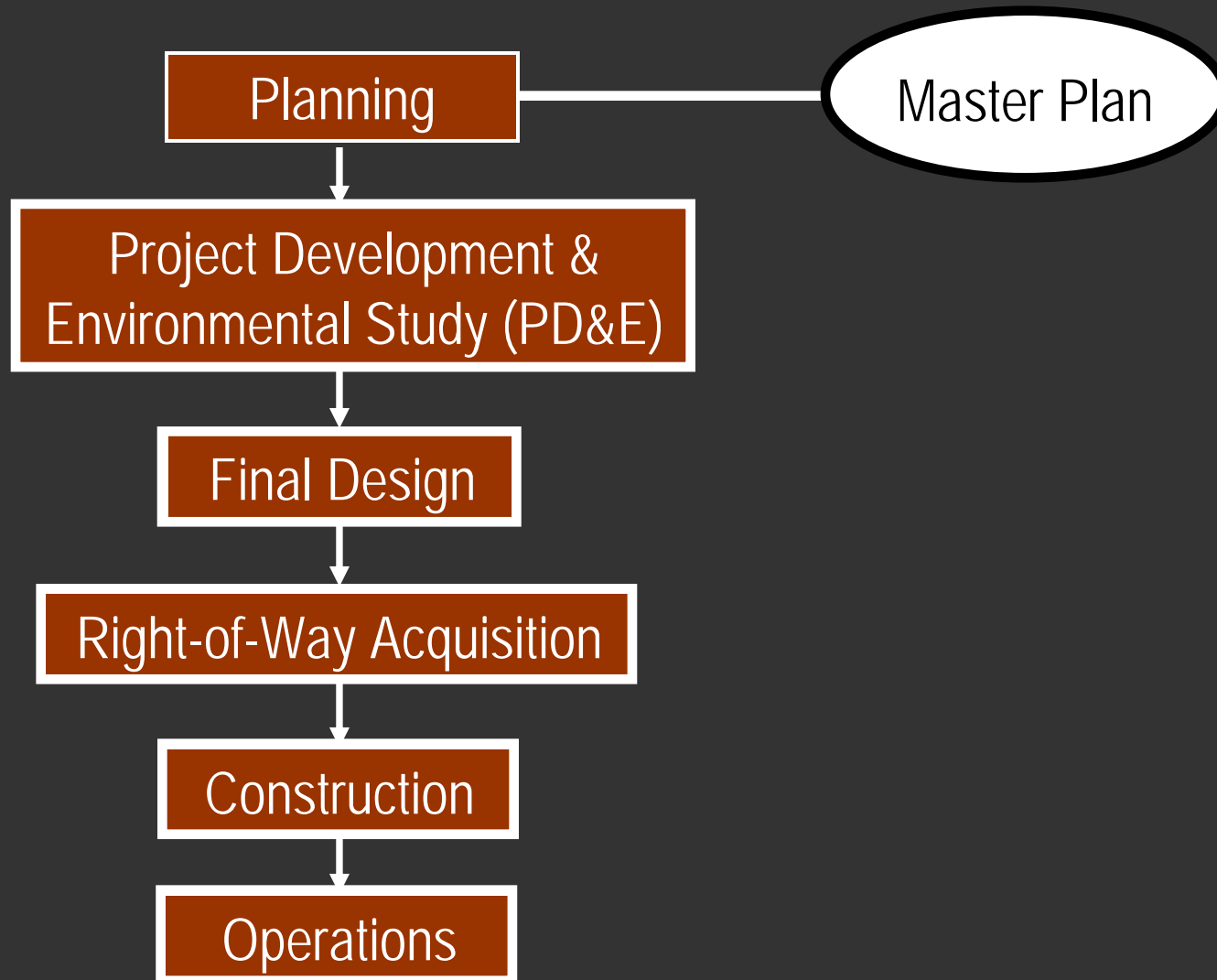


# Final Master Plan





# Project Process







# NFTCA Website

- [www.nwftca.com](http://www.nwftca.com)
- View project updates, meeting times and minutes, presentations and documents
- Sign-up for study's mailing list

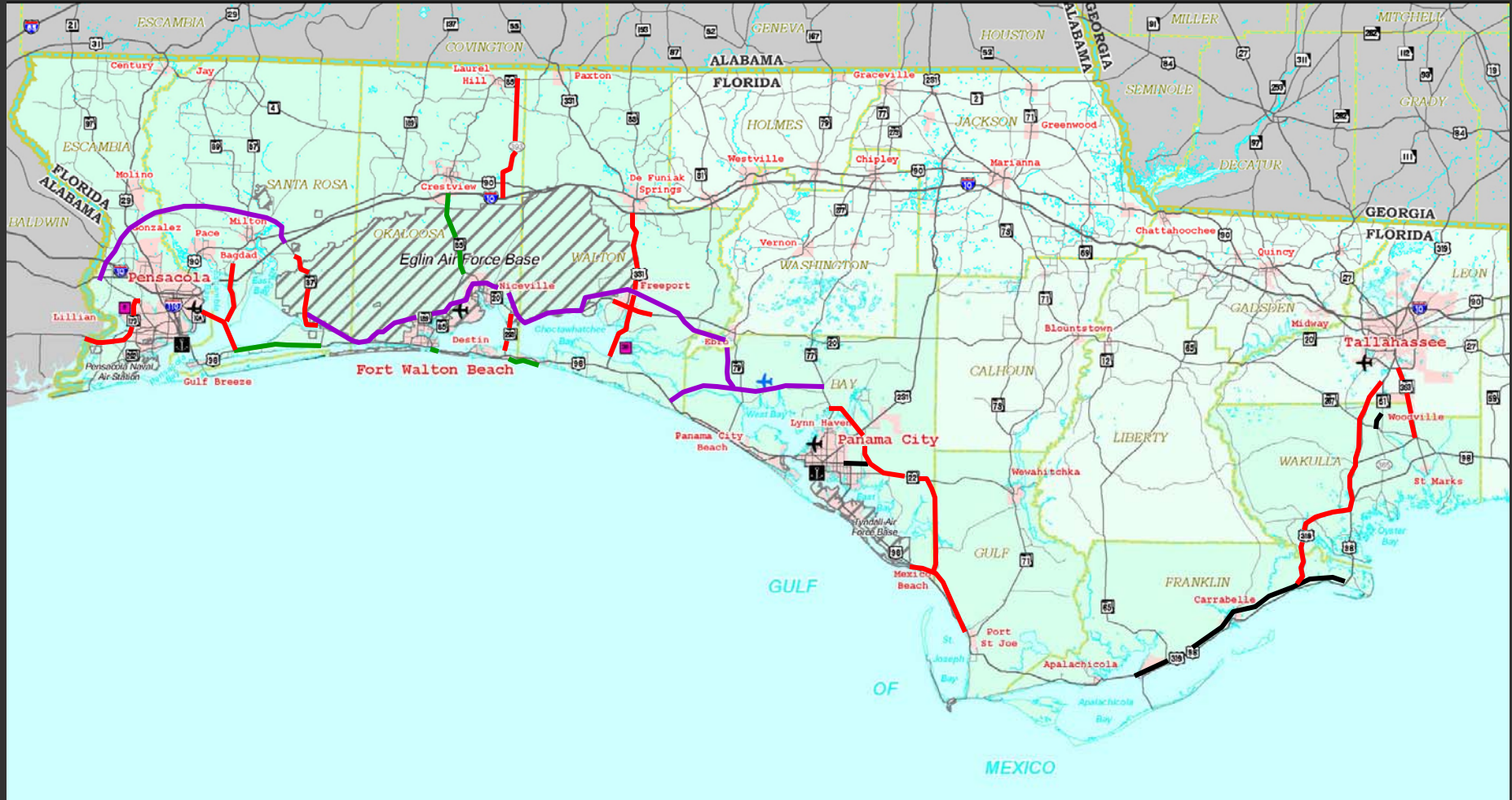


# NFTCA Website

Thank You



# Final Master Plan





# Public Involvement Opportunities

- State requires a Public Involvement Program (PIP) for both State and Federal environmental documents
- Plan must accomplish the following:
  - Establish a set of goals and objectives
  - Identify people to be reached (agencies, interest groups, etc.)
  - Develop a general approach and set of strategies
  - Identify specific techniques (website, newsletters, small group meetings, etc.)





# Public Involvement Opportunities

- State also requires that each project proceed through the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process
- ETDM is a “streamlining” tool that provides for early coordination between agencies and provides public access to information about proposed projects
- Allows the public to view and remark to agency comments/concerns



# Public Involvement Opportunities

- Other State and Federal policies are in place to encourage public participation on transportation projects
  - Proper notification of meetings
  - Environmental documents must be made available at public locations (library, schools, etc.)
  - Public input/comments must be properly documented





# Public Involvement Opportunities

- At a minimum, the State asks that the following public meetings be held during the development of any project:
  - Project Kick-off Meeting
  - Project Alternatives Meeting
  - Final Public Hearing