

## **Citizens Advisory Committee Bylaws**

The Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) is the primary agency responsible for transportation planning in DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, including the Sebring – Avon Park Urbanized Area. The HRTPO Board consists of twelve (12) voting members representing eight (8) local governments. The HRTPO is a legislative body with the power to develop and adopt plans, to manage priorities for the programming of improvements to the transportation system, and to program and administer federal and state planning grants.

According to the HRTPO Bylaws, adopted on April 29, 2015, the HRTPO shall have a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) that will meet a minimum of four times per year.

### **Section 1. Name**

The name of this Committee shall be the **Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization Citizens Advisory Committee**.

### **Section 2. Purpose and Authority**

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will represent a broad cross-section of interested citizens in the transportation planning process in the region and provide meaningful engagement while giving voice to their community. The CAC provides an avenue for obtaining public input for the deliberations on transportation issues. The CAC will assist in identifying the needs of the public and potential outreach opportunities. The authority of this Committee shall be set forth by the HRTPO pursuant to Section 339.175(6)(e)1., Florida Statutes as amended.

### **Section 3. Functions**

The functions of the CAC shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Providing information and overall community values and needs into the transportation planning program of the HRTPO.
2. Evaluating and proposing solutions from a citizen's perspective concerning alternative transportation proposals and critical issues.
3. Sharing knowledge gained through the CAC with community groups and local citizens through discussions and meetings.

## **Section 4. Membership**

1. The members of the CAC shall be appointed by the HRTPO Board.
2. The CAC shall be comprised of two (2) appointed citizens from each member county and one member each from the Cities of Sebring and Avon Park totaling fourteen (14) members.
3. The CAC membership shall represent a broad spectrum of social and economic backgrounds and interests in transportation. Membership will be appointed by geographic area in which the person resides, provides services to, or works.

The CAC will be constituted and appointed consistent with the approved HRTPO Public Participation Plan (PPP). CAC members will be selected based upon application submitted to the HRTPO. For an application to be complete for consideration by the HRTPO for appointment, it must be reviewed and verified by the local member government where the applicant resides, provides services to, or works. Completed applications will be placed on the HRTPO agenda for Board consideration to fill vacancies. The same selection procedures shall apply to Alternates that may be designated for voting members.

## **Section 5. Terms, Attendance, and Alternate Membership**

Members shall serve two (2) year terms and may be reappointed. Members and alternates shall serve at the pleasure of the HRTPO Board. All CAC members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings. More than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences by any member may result in removal of the member by the HRTPO Board. An unexcused absence is defined as the failure to provide prior notice to HRTPO staff when a member will not be attending a regular meeting.

### **Alternate Membership**

An alternate member may act on behalf of the regular member in that member's absence. Alternate members shall have the same privileges as regular members, except serving as an officer.

### **Vacancies**

Alternate members will be appointed when there are no vacancies on the CAC for the qualifying local government. Alternates will automatically assume a vacant position on the CAC.

A list of membership of the CAC shall be maintained and updated by the HRTPO staff.

## **Section 6. Officers and Duties**

- A. A Chair and Vice-Chair of the CAC shall be elected at the last regularly scheduled meeting of a calendar year and shall serve for the following calendar year or until the next election is held.
- B. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall not represent the same local government.
- C. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall not hold the position for more than two (2) consecutive years.
- D. Any regular member may nominate or be nominated as Chair or Vice-Chair. All elections shall be by the majority vote of the members present. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent from a meeting, a temporary Chair shall be selected to serve for that meeting.
- E. The Chair shall preside at all meetings. The Vice-Chair shall, during the absence of the Chair, have and exercise all the duties and powers of the Chair.
- F. Any vacancy created by resignation of the Chair or Vice-Chair shall be filled by majority vote of members present at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The new Chair or Vice-Chair will fill the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacant office.

## **Section 7. Meetings**

The CAC will meet at least quarterly. The date, time, frequency and location of the CAC meeting(s) shall be mutually agreed upon by the CAC membership and HRTPO Staff.

- A. Meetings will be publically noticed and agendas including minutes from the previous meeting shall be sent to members, alternates, and press, seven (7) days prior to the regular meeting date, posted on the HRTPO website and distributed to local media outlets.
- B. Special meetings may be called as necessary. Reasonable notice must be provided to the members, alternates, and the public and press for special meetings.
- C. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting membership, which therefore is eight (8) members.
- D. Each regular member present will have an equal vote. A vote on an issue or decision is by a simple majority of the regular members present. Alternate members may be counted and act in place of a regular member for that meeting only.
- E. In accordance with the Florida Sunshine Law, all CAC meetings will be open to the public and provide an opportunity for interested parties to hear and discuss

transportation issues. An agenda item for public participation will be included at each meeting.

- F. Voting shall be by voice vote, but a member may have his/her vote recorded in the minutes upon request. A roll call vote shall be conducted upon request of any member.
- G. All motions shall require a second, and all motions or a second may be amended or withdrawn with the approval of the member making the motion.

### **Section 8. Amendments**

The Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the CAC members present at any meeting, provided that all voting members have received written copies of the proposed amendments with the regular agenda prior to the meeting.