

# Continuity of Operations Plan



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## I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

To ensure the continued operations of the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), it is vital that a plan for continuing operations in the event of an emergency be put in place. This Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) ensures that the TPO's resources can be efficiently deployed to supplement wider emergency planning efforts.

The TPO's COOP provides a process that is applicable to all TPO functions and activities, including the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Unified Planning Work Program, the Congestion Management Process, and other plans and updates.

Because the Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) is the agency office of the HRTPO through a staff services agreement, the TPO COOP was developed in a manner consistent with the policies and procedures of the CFRPC. As such, the TPO's COOP outlines roles and responsibilities of TPO staff with respect to the HRTPO Board and its advisory committees; addresses emergency management of projects and recurring activities; and describes potential TPO involvement in emergency planning tasks, also known as Mission Essential Functions (MEFs). For each of these areas, the COOP provides strategies that will lead to the continuity of TPO operations.

### Purpose

By implementing all strategies contained within the HRTPO COOP and by satisfying all objectives, the TPO hopes to achieve:

**Timely completion of all TPO tasks throughout the duration of an emergency, regardless of the nature and duration of that emergency.**



## ORGANIZATION OF THE TPO COOP

The HRTPO COOP was developed by TPO staff to ensure that the TPO could continue operations in the event of an emergency. This plan contains measurable objectives and is consistent with other relevant planning documents, including the CFRPC's COOP to provide guidance and be an additional resource. Also consistent with the HRTPO COOP is the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) of the six counties of DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee. Chapter 252, of the Florida Statutes,



and the State Emergency Management Act, requires each county in the State of Florida to prepare a CEMP. The CEMP establishes the operational framework through which a County prepares for, responds to, recovers from, and mitigates the impacts of disasters, ensuring the continuation of essential functions during an emergency situation. The CEMP defines responsibilities for County departments and personnel.

The plan component of the COOP detailed in Section II. Concept of Operations is organized into several sections, each addressing a different dimension of emergency planning. Section II contains strategies for activating the COOP, including pre-emergency preparedness (in the event that advance notice of the emergency is available) and post-emergency logistical planning. Section III contains strategies for continuing TPO Board and advisory committee functions. Section IV addresses the completion of TPO projects and recurring activities. Section V contains strategies and activities that support wider emergency planning efforts (known as Mission Essential Functions). To better enhance and improve the Continuity of Operations Plan, the TPO shall conduct an After-Action Review of its COOP at the conclusion of an activation. This will serve to improve any areas and make the required changes, if needed.

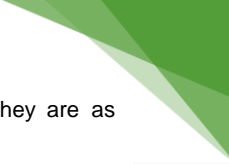
### A summary of the contents of each section is as follows:

#### Section II. Concept of Operations

The TPO COOP describes logistical planning in the event of an emergency, including general preparedness measures, immediate pre-event planning (where advanced notification is available), activation of the COOP, and post-event logistics under the heading Concept of Operations. The Concept of Operations section of the TPO COOP is consistent with the CFRPC's policies, procedures and addresses planning scenarios generally applicable to all Heartland counties. The TPO COOP details the responsibilities of TPO staff with respect to general preparedness, and logistics.

#### Section III. Continuity of HRTPO Board and Advisory Committee Meetings

The HRTPO is a statutorily authorized Board composed of representatives of local governments and is the primary agency responsible for transportation planning in the six Heartland counties of DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee.



Three advisory committees have been established to assist the TPO. They are as follows:

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): Composed of local government staff and other technically qualified agency representatives
- Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC): Composed of members of the general public or public interest groups
- Mobility Advisory Committee (MAC): Composed of advocates and citizens.

The strategies contained in the COOP with respect to the TPO Board and advisory committees include evaluating the status of committee meeting schedules, potential challenges to the normal notification, agenda preparation, and meeting conduct processes.

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#### **Section IV. Continuity of TPO Projects and Recurring Activities**

The TPO undertakes a number of short and long term-projects. Many of these projects, such as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Transit Development Plan (TDP), are statutorily required and include deadlines for TPO action. As such, the COOP contains several strategies for fulfilling TPO obligations and continuing ongoing projects throughout the duration of an emergency.

In addition, some TPO projects are performed by consultants. These projects typically have deadlines contained in the contract or work order. For these projects, some action by the TPO or by TPO staff might be required to keep the project moving efficiently and to comply with contractual obligations.

#### **Section V. TPO Mission Essential Functions (MEFs)**

Although TPO work tasks are identified in the annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), interim emergency transportation planning tasks may occur (known as Mission Essential Functions or MEFs) that take advantage of the TPO's resources and abilities.

## II. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The Concept of Operations section of the TPO COOP provides specific direction for TPO staff.

### Objectives for this Section:

#### Objective 2.1

For each emergency event, TPO staff will be fully operational with telephone and email access within 48 hours of the activation of the TPO COOP or by the second business day after the event.

#### Measure of Effectiveness

Number of hours needed to become fully operational upon activation of the TPO COOP.

### Strategies for this Section:

#### A. Communications and Activation of the COOP

Throughout the duration of any emergency, the HRTPO Staff Services Director will be the primary source of information for the TPO during an emergency event and will announce and coordinate the activation of the TPO COOP. Activation of the TPO COOP can be a result of a wide range of emergencies and is not exclusive to natural disasters, but also includes terrorist attacks and technological disruptions. The TPO Staff Services Director will notify all TPO staff and be their primary source of information. Consistent with CFRPC's procedures, TPO staff will participate in the Agency's call list and order of succession process as identified in Appendix A.




#### B. Preparedness items

Depending on the nature of the impending emergency and/or the duration of pre-event warning, the TPO Staff Services Director will prepare and/or coordinate preparedness items. A summary of preparedness items that are the responsibility of TPO staff are as follows:

- TPO call team/list order of succession. This appears in Appendix A of this plan.
- Electronic Storage of Documents. This appears in Appendix B of this plan.
- Computer equipment care (in accordance to CFRPC policies).
- Hard copies of Maps. This appears in Appendix C of this plan.
- Original TPO agreements and signed contracts.

#### C. Alternative Facilities

In the event that the CFRPC office building which houses the HRTPO staff should become incapacitated during an emergency, the TPO Staff Services Director will then identify a secure work area for TPO staff within an appropriate Alternate Relocation Point (ARP). When possible, TPO staff may telecommute from home until full office operations



are restored. Information on these procedures will be communicated to the TPO staff on details of the ARP.

#### **D. Support Infrastructure**

At either the TPO's regular workplace or the ARP, the TPO Staff Services Director will assess the condition of the TPO's support infrastructure. The TPO Staff Services Director will ensure that the work place meets the following conditions:

- i. Immediate capability to perform essential functions under various threat conditions;
- ii. Sufficient space and equipment to sustain the TPO;
- iii. Interoperable communications;
- iv. Reliable logistical support, services, and infrastructure systems, including water, power, heating, air conditioning etc.;
- v. Ability to sustain operations for a period of up to 30 days;
- vi. Consideration for the health, safety, and emotional well-being of relocated employees; and
- vii. Appropriate physical security and access controls.

Depending upon the condition of the support infrastructure, the CFRPC will coordinate under its emergency procedures to repair, install or procure new systems, or utilize alternative systems. The TPO Staff Services Director will contact Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), other TPO's, or local agencies about sharing or acquiring through emergency purchase authority, any equipment necessary for the TPO to quickly resume its basic staff functions.



## III. CONTINUITY OF HRTPO & ADVISORY

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The HRTPO works to coordinate the improvement of all facets of the transportation network in the Heartland. This effort includes the monitoring and evaluation of existing conditions, the development of improvement strategies, the facilitation of meaningful public input, and the implementation of evaluated and funded strategies.

All TPO's are designated and funded through Federal legislation mandating the coordination of plans and improvements in areas with a population of 50,000 or more. The intent of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 related to the authorization of TPOs was to ensure projects were developed with local input according to "continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative" transportation planning – the "3C" planning approach. To help make decisions, the TPO uses recommendations from advisory committee members. These committees offer input from citizens, bicycle/pedestrian interests, and local technical experts.

#### Technical Advisory Committee



The TPO Technical Advisory Committee is composed of technically qualified representatives of agencies responsible for controlling, developing and improving the transportation system including cities in the counties of DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee. The TAC has a total of twenty-four (24) voting members. In addition to local government staff, TAC members include representatives from the six counties, 11 municipalities, Sebring Airport Authority, two regional planning councils

representing Transportation Disadvantaged Planning, and FDOT as an ex-officio member. Committee duties include the coordination of transportation planning and programming activities; review of all transportation technical studies and reports; and review of work programs and transportation improvement programs. The principal responsibility of the TAC is to provide technical recommendations to the TPO on transportation matters.

#### Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) has a total of fourteen (14) voting members. The CAC strives to represent the citizens of the six counties of the Heartland and is responsible for providing continuous public input for the TPO decision-making process. In this capacity, the committee reviews and comments on transportation planning documents and relevant issues to be brought before the TPO Board.

The makeup of the CAC is geographically representative of the HRTPO area. Two (2) CAC members are appointed to represent each of the six counties, one (1) to represent the City of Sebring, and one (1) to represent the City of Avon Park.

Commented [JC3]: When I add these up, I get 14 members rather than the 12 listed above.

## Mobility Advisory Committee

The Mobility Advisory Committee (MAC) is appointed by the HRTPO to advise on special transportation interests, issues, or travel modes. These may include bicycle and pedestrian matters, transportation for individuals with disabilities, transit, trail users, and other modal interest. Ex-officio members of the MAC may represent FDOT, local law enforcement, or other governmental interests.

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## Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Boards

There are three (3) Local Coordinating Boards (LCDs) for the Transportation Disadvantaged in the Heartland region. One LCB covers the county of DeSoto and is staffed by the DeSoto County Board of County Commissioners. One LCB covers the counties of Glades and Hendry and is staffed by the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council in Ft. Myers. This Board functions as the interface between the County's transportation disadvantaged and the City of Ft. Myers. One LCB covers the counties of Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee and is staffed by the Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) in Bartow. The transportation disadvantaged program assists in providing mobility to the elderly, children-at-risk, the disabled, and other individuals who cannot provide their own transportation. The purpose of these Boards is to identify local service needs and to provide information, advice, direction, and support to the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). Each Board member is from a user group or specific agency that represents the service area's transportation disadvantaged population.



To ensure that the public is afforded adequate opportunity for public input into TPO matters, the advisory committees represent the fundamental means for the public to become involved. In addition to citizens, others interested in or affected by, transportation planning may become involved through attendance at committee meetings and review of committee activities.

## Objectives for this Section

### Objective 3.1

A quorum will be present for each TPO and advisory committee meeting, effective the first meeting after activation of the COOP.

#### Measure of Effectiveness

Number of Board and advisory committee members in attendance at the first meeting after activation of the COOP.



## Strategies for this section

### A. Meeting Facilities

Immediately after an emergency event, the TPO Staff Services Director will coordinate with Emergency Management Staff to assess damages to regular meeting facility locations. In the event that regular meeting room facilities are inaccessible or reassigned for emergency purposes, the TPO Staff Services Director will coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center in the affected county to determine

the availability of conference rooms at alternative relocation points (ARPs). Due to the multi-jurisdictional nature of the TPO Board, a partial list of ARPs for conducting TPO and advisory committee meetings include both local government and other facilities. ARPs include:

- CareerSource Heartland, Sebring
- DeSoto County Administration Building, Arcadia
- Hardee County Courthouse Annex, Wauchula
- Hendry County Commission Chambers, LaBelle
- Highlands County Board of County Commissioners Board Room, Sebring
- Okeechobee City Administrative Building, Okeechobee City

If regular meeting rooms are unavailable or unsafe, or an emergency exists that prohibits multiple people from physically meeting together, then the TPO Staff Services Director shall confer with the Chair and with the HRTPO Legal Counsel and determine if a virtual or teleconference meeting may be held in lieu of an in-person meeting.




### B. Meeting Schedules and Notification

The TPO Staff Services Director will coordinate with the Emergency Operations Centers in the affected county(ies) to determine if emergency conditions warrant a full or partial rescheduling of regularly scheduled meetings during the emergency period.

1. Upon a determination that it is unsafe or inappropriate to conduct regularly scheduled meetings (for example, due to unsafe travel conditions, interruption in communications, or general public safety and welfare), the TPO Staff Services Director will notify the TPO and its advisory committees via all of the following methods:

- a. The TPO Staff Services Director will inform the Emergency Operations Center(s) of meeting status. He/she will, in turn, post the announcement through a variety of forums, including notifying the County switchboard operators, Local Government Access television, County Websites, newspapers, and radio;
- b. The TPO Staff Services Director will draft a meeting cancellation memo, and staff will attempt direct mail to the committee members, if possible;

- 
- c. TPO staff will attempt direct e-mail to the affected committee members and local governments;
  - d. TPO staff will attempt phone calls to the affected committee members and local governments; and
  - e. The TPO Staff Services Director will draft and post an announcement on the TPO Website and Facebook.

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2. In the event that emergency conditions create doubt concerning any scheduled TPO or advisory committee meeting, TPO staff will attempt to contact members by phone in addition to the regular meeting announcements.

3. The TPO will continue to utilize multiple meeting notification techniques until such time as the state of emergency is lifted or normal communications have resumed as determined by the TPO Staff Services Director.

### **C. Meeting Preparation and Conduct**

All normal TPO meeting preparation and agenda item preparation procedures will apply in the event of an emergency (see HRTPO Public Participation Plan). The TPO Staff Services Director will evaluate conference facilities in the ARP to ensure adequate seating and recordation capabilities.

Should a virtual or teleconference meeting be determined to satisfy all meeting requirements during a declared emergency, the TPO Staff will provide notification and full instructions on how the Board, or Committee members, and the public may participate.



## IV. CONTINUITY OF HRTPO PROJECTS & RECURRING ACTIVITIES

The TPO undertakes many short-term and long-term projects. Examples of such projects include the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), development and adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Transit Development Plan (TDP). In addition, the TPO engages in many activities on a recurring basis, including coordinating with FDOT on the status of transportation projects and developing an annual budget and work program known as a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Many of the TPO's projects and activities are requirements of state and federal law. The TPO may, however, also undertake a project, such as a corridor study, as a sound planning practice.

Whether or not a TPO project or activity is required by statute, it represents an investment of TPO resources. As such, compliance with deadlines and continuing, ongoing projects is a top priority.

### Objectives for this Section

#### Objective 4.1

TPO staff will meet 100% of Federal and State deadlines for completion of required work tasks.

##### Measure of Effectiveness

Percent of required tasks completed in compliance with required deadlines.

#### Objective 4.2

TPO staff will complete consultant contracts within 10% of the original contract date after activation of the COOP.

##### Measure of Effectiveness:

Number of consultant contracts completed within 10% of the original contract date.

### Strategies for this Section

#### A. Assessment Activities

1. Immediately after an event, the TPO Staff Services Director will consult the HRTPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and inventory all ongoing and upcoming TPO projects and activities identifying deadlines for completion.
2. In consultation with the Emergency Management personnel in the affected county(ies), the TPO Staff Services Director will determine the severity and duration of the disruption caused by the event and assesses the earliest possibility for resumption of operations.



**B. Strategies for Statutorily Required Projects and Activities**

1. In light of the above, the TPO Staff Services Director will assess the feasibility of meeting required deadlines.
2. If a deadline cannot be met due to a mandatory cancellation of an TPO Board Meeting, the TPO Staff Services Director will contact the appropriate review agency and determine:
  - If the TPO Staff Services Director has the discretion or authority to take action on an interim basis; or
  - If the deadline can be postponed until the Board can resume its regular meeting schedule; or
  - If an emergency meeting of the TPO should be scheduled on an interim basis prior to the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
3. If a deadline cannot be met due to a lack of sufficient staff time to complete required tasks, the TPO Staff Services Director will contact the appropriate review agency and determine:
  - If the deadline can be postponed in light of the current emergency; or
  - If a supplement to staff resources can be obtained either through contractual services or inter-agency cooperation.

**C. Strategies for Other TPO Projects and Activities**

1. The TPO Staff Services Director shall review the contracts for all outstanding projects and activities being performed with the assistance of consultant services and determine scheduled completion dates.
2. The TPO Staff Services Director will contact the Project Manager to determine if local emergency conditions will impact timely completion of the project.
  - a. If it is determined that local conditions will affect scheduled project completion, due to inability of TPO to fulfill its contractual obligations, inability of consultant to access information, or inability of consultant to perform work tasks, then the TPO Staff Services Director will seek an extension of the period of performance of the contract, not to exceed thirty days, subject to Board approval.

## V. MISSION ESSENTIAL FUNCTION (MEF) PLANNING

The HRTPO performs a vital role in transportation funding, planning, system oversight and coordination. If requested, TPO staff will coordinate local emergency needs with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), or Florida's Department of Transportation (FDOT). Potential coordination activities may include:

1. Providing information on local transportation conditions and operating status;
2. Coordinating meetings between local jurisdictions and Federal or State transportation agencies; and
3. Relating County transit, traffic operations or engineering needs to appropriate federal and state agencies, including Transportation Disadvantaged services.

If necessary, TPO staff should be prepared to conduct emergency meetings to amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or accept grant funding or assistance necessary to restore the transportation system to its pre-emergency operating conditions. Any emergency TIP amendment or prioritization task will be performed in accordance with Section III (Continuity of HRTPO & Advisory) of this document.

### Objectives for this Section

#### Objective 5.1

TPO staff will complete 100% of the Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) requested of it during or after the emergency event.

#### Measure of Effectiveness:

Percent of MEFs completed as requested.





## **APPENDIX A: Staff Phone Numbers and Order of Succession**

<b>HRTPO Office Phone — (863) 534-7130</b>	<b>Staff Extensions</b>
TPO Staff Services Director	130
<u>Transportation Director</u>	134
Program Manager	131
Program Manager	133
Program Coordinator	129





## APPENDIX B: Electronic Storage of Documents

1. TPO Original Contracts and Agreements. These include:
  - a) Joint Participation Agreement (JPA) for PL Funds
  - b) TPO Interlocal Agreement
  - c) TPO Apportionment Plan
  - d) Agreement for Mass Transit Service provision
  - e) Agreement for TPO Staff Services
  - f) Section 5303(d) Public Transportation JPA
  - g) Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Agreement
  - h) General Planning Consultant Agreements
2. Originals of each of the TPO's major plans and projects, including:
  - a) Long Range Transportation Plan (2040)
  - b) Transit Development Plan
  - c) Transportation Improvement Program
  - d) Unified Planning Work Program
  - e) Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plans (2)
3. Copies of all signed Work Orders and Work Order Scopes of Services

### CFRPC ELECTRONIC STORAGE POLICY

The CFRPC complies with the State of Florida Electronic Records and Records Management Practices consistent with Rule 1B-26.003, Florida Administrative Code which provides standards for record (master) copies of public records which reside in electronic recordkeeping systems, establishes minimum requirements for the creation, utilization, maintenance, retention, preservation, storage, and disposition of electronic record (master) copies, regardless of the media.

In addition, the CFRPC backs up all electronic files off-site. The HRTPO implements the following electronic storage policies:

**Email:** HRTPO staff uses cloud-based Microsoft Office 365 for email which is internet-based and not physically located on-site. This allows all staff to have access to email as long as they have access to a computer or smart device and have an internet connection.

**Website:** HRTPO staff uses WordPress to host its website. WordPress is internet-based and not physically located on-site. This allows staff to access and update the HRTPO website as long as they have access to a computer or smart device and have an internet connection.

**File Backup:**

Executive Director.....130; cell 863-944-8600  
Deputy Director.....178  
Programs Director.....132  
Transportation Director.....133134  
Finance Director.....105  
Program Coordinator.....129  
Office Manager.....101

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The CFRPC implements a complete backup and recovery process of the assets and contents stored electronically. This process provides for regular backups of files and for restoration or recovery of files from regularly scheduled backups after an outage has occurred. The following schedule lists each of the detailed backup procedures included in this backup plan. It also indicates the frequency and schedule for each backup.

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**Backup Schedule**

Name/ID	File System(s)	Level	Frequency	Schedule	Responsible Individual/Org.
<b>CFRPC-DC1</b>	D & J:	Full	Daily	8:00 PM	Automated/Scheduled Task
<b>CFRPC-EX1</b>	Exchange Store (S:)	Full	Daily	8:00 PM	Automated/Scheduled Task
<b>Financial Folder CFRPC Folder (S Drive)</b>	\\CFRPC-DC1\CFRPC \\CFRPC-DC1\Finance	Full	Daily	8:00 PM	Automated/Scheduled Task
<b>QuickBooks</b>	QB Data	Full	Daily		Automated/Scheduled Task
<b>Copy to External Disk</b>	All Backup Data	Full	Weekly	Sunday 9:00A	Automated/Scheduled Task
<b>Take External Drive Offsite</b>	All Backup Data	Full	In case of emergency		

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In addition, the external hard drive that holds backup data can be taken home Friday and brought in and reconnected Monday. In the event of a disaster, the backup device can be used to restore data to existing or new equipment or virtually in the Cipher datacenter.

**Vendor Contacts:**

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Comcast (To resolve any internet connection related issues)  
1-800-316-1619  
Account # 15515270837-01-1

Cipher

Cipher  
IT Consultant and Off-Site Electronic File Storage Manger  
(863) 686-011  
[networking@zeroworries.com](mailto:networking@zeroworries.com)



## **APPENDIX C: MISSION ESSENTIAL MAPS AND LISTS**

- a) Regional Roadway Network Map
- b) Cost Feasible Table for LRTP
- c) TPO Adopted List of Priority Projects
- d) Regional Roadway Network Current and Future Lanes

## APPENDIX D: EMERGENCY CONTACTS

<b>ALL EMERGENCIES</b>	<b>911</b>
<b>State of Florida Emergency Information Line</b>	1-800-342-3557
<b>Florida Highway Patrol</b>	*FHP or 866-369-4613
<b>Federal Emergency Management Admin. (FEMA)</b>	770-220-5200

### Non-Emergency Contacts

County Sheriff Offices	
DeSoto	863-993-4700
Glades	863-946-1600
Hardee	863-773-4144
Hendry	863-674-5000
Highlands	863-402-7200
Okeechobee	863-763-3117
Polk	863-298-6200

### Local Police Departments

City of Arcadia	863-993-4660
City of Moore Haven (County Sherriff)	863-946-1600
City of Bowling Green	863-375-3549
City of Wauchula	863-773-3265
Town of Zolfo Springs (County Sherriff)	863-773-0304
City of Clewiston	863-983-1474
City of LaBelle (County Sherriff)	863-674-4060
City of Avon Park	863-402-7200
City of Sebring	863-471-5108
Town of Lake Placid	863-699-3757
City of Okeechobee	863-763-5521
City of Bartow	863-534-5034

### Emergency Operations Centers

DeSoto	863-993-4831
Glades	863-946-6020
Hardee	863-773-6373
Hendry	863-674-5400
Highlands	863-385-1112
Okeechobee	863-763-3212
Polk	863-298-7001

### Fire Rescue

DeSoto	863-993-4842
Glades	863-946-0566
Hardee	863-773-4362
Hendry	863-674-5412
Highlands	863-385-1112
City of Avon Park	863-453-6557
City of Sebring	863-471-5105
Okeechobee	863-763-5544
Polk	863-519-7350



555 E. Church Street, Bartow, FL 33830

(863) 534-7130

[info@heartlandregionaltpo.org](mailto:info@heartlandregionaltpo.org)

<http://www.heartlandregionaltpo.org>