

**DRAFT**

# Continuity of Operations Plan

February 22, 2021



Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization  
for the Gainesville Urbanized Area



# Continuity of Operations Plan

## ENDORSEMENT

This Continuity of Operations Plan has been developed consistent with federal and state requirements and approved on August 24, 2020 by the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area  
2009 NW 67th Place  
Gainesville, FL 32653-1603

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Charlest Chestnut IV, Chair

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# Executive Summary

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to ensure the continuity of essential office functions in the occurrence of a major event/emergency/disaster- such as a fire, bomb threat, chemical/biological threat/attack, hurricane, public health emergency or tornado. In particular, this Continuity of Operations Plan addresses the Fixing America's Transportation System Act planning factors 2 (safety) and 3 (security). The procedures discussed in this report have been tailored to the needs of the Gainesville Metropolitan Area.

Included within this report are the following elements that specify how the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area (Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization) will continue with essential office functions in the event of a natural or man-made disaster:

- Plan to Continue Function in the Event of a Natural or Man-Made Disaster;
- Connections to State of Florida, Alachua County and City of Gainesville Emergency Preparedness Plans;
- Alternate Work Sites;
- Back-up of Storage Data; and
- Communications.

**Please note that the 2021 annual review of the Continuity of Operations Plan addresses the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which not only affected Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization office operations, but also the ability of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees to conduct public hearings, public meetings and public workshops at their respective normal meeting locations or in any public building.**

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# Chapter I

## Plan to Continue Function in the Event of a Natural or Man-Made Disaster

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# Chapter I: Plan to Continue Function in the Event of a Natural or Man-Made Disaster

The purpose of this section is to discuss procedures that will be activated in the event of a natural or man-made disaster that impacts the operations of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area (Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization). Some examples of a natural or man-made disaster include a fire, bomb threat, cyber attack, chemical/biological threat/attack, hurricane, flood, tornado, epidemic or pandemic. Continuity of operations impacted by any of these events concerns both the:

- Operational functions of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its staff; and
- Capability of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees to conduct public hearings, public meetings and public workshops.

In the event of a county, state or federal State of Emergency declaration that impacts normal activities of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization, its advisory committees and staff, the Continuity of Operation Plan shall be activated. The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Executive Director will coordinate the activation of the Continuity of Operation Plan with the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Chair, Alachua County, City of Gainesville and the Florida Department of Transportation.

Authorizations for continuity of operations for virtual public meetings through the use of communications media technology, as established by Resolution No. 2020-01 to address impacts of epidemics and pandemics, shall include:

- Compliance with any federal, state and/or local-declared state of emergency and related emergency executive orders, including conditions and/or limitations: for use and/or access to public buildings; size and/or locations of public gatherings; travel restrictions and personal safety equipment;
- Exclusive use of communications media technology in compliance with a specified exemption for in-person public meetings as authorized by executive order of the Governor and/or state legislative action; and
- Public noticing of virtual public hearings, public meetings and public workshops of Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees.

Authorizations for continuity of operations for Emergency Approvals under a Declared County, State or Federal State of Emergency to Ensure Compliance with State and Federal Requirements for Metropolitan Planning Organizations, as established by Resolution No. 2020-02 to address impacts of epidemics and pandemics, shall include:

While operating under a declared county, state or federal State of Emergency, the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area, with the approval of the Chair of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area or Vice-Chair of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area in the absence of the Chair is hereby authorized to:

- Amend a program document to maintain consistency with state or federal programs, or amend program or project funding if the time constraint is such that action at the next scheduled meeting of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area would significantly delay progress on a project previously supported by the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area;
- Approve the revision and submission of the Unified Planning Work Program and amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program, provided that the process for seeking approval of these actions shall follow all applicable procedures when the county, state or federal State of Emergency is suspended;
- Submit information, reports, grant applications or documents on behalf of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area that is deemed essential by the Federal Highway Administration and/or the Florida Department of Transportation; and
- Submit executed copies of this resolution to the Florida Department of Transportation; the Federal Transit Administration (through the Florida Department of Transportation); and the Federal Highway Administration (through the Florida Department of Transportation).

## A. Phases

### Staff Operations

At some time in the future, a natural or man-made disaster may affect the ability of the staff for the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization to perform their functions from their offices at 2009 NW 67th Place, Gainesville, Florida. Relocation to an alternate site or the use of virtual communications media may be required for a number of emergency reasons. If the emergency impacts are so severe that Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization offices are unusable for such a long period of time that normal operations are affected, then this Continuity of Operations Plan will be activated. The following sections discuss the four phases that will be followed when this plan is activated.

Staff will prepare a list of items which would be important when conducting work tasks which would need to be completed during the activation of the Continuity of Operations Plan and while operating at an alternate location. This list should be limited to essential items which could be removed within one hour. This list will be stored on the public drive at a designated location, such as p:GO\_KITS.

### Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Public Meetings

At some time in the future, a natural or man-made disaster may affect the ability of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and/or its advisory committees to assemble to conduct metropolitan planning activities within their respective regular meeting facilities as identified in the Public Involvement Plan. Relocation to alternate sites or the use of virtual communications media may be required for a number of emergency reasons.

If the emergency impacts are so severe that Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization offices are unusable for such a long period of time that normal operations are affected, then this Continuity of Operations Plan will be activated. The following sections discuss the four phases that will be followed when this plan is activated.

With activation of the Continuity of Operations Plan, Staff will coordinate with Alachua County and/or the City of Gainesville to:

- Identify alternate meeting locations, if available; and/or
- Conduct virtual meetings via communications media technology.

Use of alternate meeting locations and/or virtual meetings will be publically noticed in accordance with the Public Involvement Plan and any State of Emergency conditions. Appropriate meeting materials shall be prepared and made available to the persons identified in the meeting contacts lists.

## **1. Phase 1- Plan Activation (0 to 12 hours)**

### **Staff Operations**

The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Executive Director is Scott R. Koons, Executive Director of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council. In response to an emergency situation, the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Executive Director will activate this Continuity of Operations Plan and ensure that all employees are safe and informed of the activation of the Plan. During this phase, arrangements will be made to safely evacuate the building and relocate to the alternate work site.

During plan activation, if time permits, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will be advised to pack their “Go-Kits” and leave the building. Staff will be advised when and where to report to the selected alternate work site, including working from home

### **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Public Meetings**

In response to an emergency situation severe enough that access to the regular meeting locations by members of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and/or its advisory committees, media and the public, the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Executive Director will coordinate with Alachua County, the City of Gainesville and the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Chair concerning:

- Identification of alternate meeting locations, if available; and/or
- Preparation for conducting virtual meetings via communications media technology.

## **2. Phase 2- Alternate Operations- (12 hours to termination)**

### **Staff Operations**

As soon as operations have been safely relocated to the alternate work site or working from home, one of the first responsibilities to be implemented is the re-establishment of normal lines of communication to all outside agencies who regularly do business with the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization. Working from home will be conducted via internet access to the office server. Employees will be notified of how long Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization operations will be conducted at the alternate site/work-from-home, including information concerning payroll and any special duty assignments. As needed during this phase, employees will use social media and virtual meetings via communication media technology for interagency and consultant communications.

During this phase, work will also begin on plans to return to the primary facility. If the primary facility is rendered unusable by the emergency, plans will be developed to obtain a new primary facility.

## **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Public Meetings**

As soon as American's with Disabilities Act-accessible alternate meeting locations have been determined and secured, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff shall provide proper notification to outside agencies and public notices for public hearings, public meetings and public workshops.

Public hearings, public meetings and public workshops that are conducted via communications media technology shall also be properly noticed in accordance with the Public Involvement Plan. Media and the public shall have appropriate access to all virtual public hearings, public meetings and public workshops.

### **3. Phase 3- Reconstitution and Termination**

#### **Staff Operations**

This phase involves ending operations at the alternate site and an orderly return to a non-emergency status at the primary facility. This includes informing Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff that the emergency no longer exists and providing instructions for the resumption of normal operations. Included in this phase are plans to transition communications, records and databases back to the primary facility.

## **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Public Meetings**

This phase involves ending public hearings, public meetings and public workshops at the alternate site or virtually via communication media technology and an orderly return to a non-emergency status at the primary facility and regular meeting locations. This includes informing Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees, as well as the media and outside agencies, that the emergency no longer exists and providing instructions for the resumption of normal meeting schedules and locations.

### **4. Phase 4- After-Action Review and Remedial Action Plan**

#### **Staff Operations**

As soon as possible after operations have returned to normal at the primary facility, an assessment will be made of how well the Continuity of Operations Plan worked. This assessment will include identifying specific solutions to address any areas of concern related to problems encountered during the recent emergency incident.

## **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Public Meetings**

As soon as possible after meeting locations of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees have returned to normal at their respective primary facilities, an assessment will be made of how well the Continuity of Operations Plan worked. This assessment will include identifying specific solutions to address any areas of concern related to problems encountered during the recent emergency incident.



## **B. Plan to Notify Customers of New Work Location, Phone Numbers, Re-Route U.S. Mail**

### **Staff Operations - Alternate Site**

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will notify the following regular Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization customers of the address of the new alternate site work location as soon as possible:

- United States Postal Service;
- City of Gainesville;
- Alachua County;
- Florida Department of Transportation;
- Other agencies;
- Members of Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization advisory committees; and
- News media.

This notification will include using the conventional office telephone system, cellular telephones, emails on the Internet, and posting the new work location address and telephone number on the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization website, [www.ncfrpc.org/mtpo/index.html](http://www.ncfrpc.org/mtpo/index.html), and the websites of the City of Gainesville and Alachua County. Also, arrangements will be made with the telephone company to relocate the current telephone number of 352.955.2200 to the new work location site.

### **Staff Operations - Work-from-Home**

In the event of public access restrictions to public buildings, including the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff office, staff will primarily work from home and minimize work time spent at the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff office. Mail delivery will remain at the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff office. Telephonic communication will include use of the current telephone number of 352.955.2200 supplemented as necessary with staff cellular phones.

### **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Public Meetings - Alternate Sites**

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will coordinate with Alachua County and City of Gainesville to conduct Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees meetings at American's with Disabilities Act- compliant locations.

### **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Virtual Public Meetings**

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will coordinate with Alachua County and City of Gainesville to conduct virtual meetings via communications media technology of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees that are accessible to the general public, media and outside agencies and in compliance with the Public Involvement Plan.

## **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Hybrid Public Meetings - On-Site, Alternate Site and Virtual**

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will coordinate with Alachua County and City of Gainesville to conduct hybrid meetings [meetings that are conducted in an Americans with Disabilities Act compliant physical location and also virtual via communications media technology] of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees that are accessible to the general public, media and outside agencies and in compliance with the Public Involvement Plan. Hybrid meetings need to be compliant with the Sunshine Law, as is or as modified by State Emergency Executive Order(s).

## **C. Mission Essential Functions- Provide Vital Services and Maintain Safety**

The primary mission essential function of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization is to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process to include the development of the transportation plan, transportation improvement program and the unified planning work program.

## **D. Delegation of Staff Authority**

This section identifies the delegations of authority to ensure the rapid response to any emergency situation requiring activation of this Plan. Listed in the following section is the line of delegation of staff authority for the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization:

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Executive Director;

Transportation Disadvantaged Program Senior Planner; then

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Senior Planner.

## **E. Orders of Staff Succession**

This section identifies the person in charge of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Transportation Section in the event that the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Executive Director is absent or unable to act in fulfilling his/her normal range of responsibilities. Listed in the following section is the order of staff succession:

Transportation Disadvantaged Program Senior Planner; then

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Senior Planner.

# Chapter II

## Connections to State of Florida, Alachua County and City of Gainesville Emergency Preparedness Plans

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## **Chapter II: Connections to State of Florida, Alachua County and City of Gainesville Emergency Preparedness Plans**

The Alachua County Office of Emergency Management has identified the Alachua County Public Works Department as the lead agency within the County for coordinating transportation support operations to governments and voluntary organizations in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. This transportation support includes the following:

1. Performance of, and assisting with, evacuation and re-entry;
2. Processing of all transportation assistance requests and tasks received in the Emergency Operations Center;
3. Prioritizing transportation resources for the transportation of people, materials and services; and
4. Performing all necessary actions to assist with recovery operations.

Other lead agencies that have been identified include the Florida Department of Transportation as the Florida Lead Agency and the U.S. Department of Transportation as the Federal Lead Agency. Additional support agencies that have been identified include the Alachua County School Board, the Gainesville Regional Airport and the Gainesville Regional Transit System.

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# Chapter III

## Alternate Work Sites and Meeting Locations

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## **Chapter III: Alternate Work Sites and Meeting Locations**

### **A. Alternate Work Sites**

#### **1. Alternate Location**

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster that impacts the operations of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area (Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization), arrangements have been made with the Florida Department of Transportation to temporarily relocate office operations to the Florida Department of Transportation Gainesville Maintenance Office located at 5007 NE 39th Avenue. This site has sufficient space and equipment to accommodate relocating personnel and sustain operations for up to 30 days (with some additional resource acquisition). This site also has reliable logistical support, service, infrastructure systems (water, electrical power, heating and air conditioning, etc.) and is Americans With Disabilities Act-accessible. If for any reason the alternate work site is not available, the back-up plan is to lease office space.

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff has considered pre-positioning minimum essential equipment at this alternate facility and decided that this is not necessary. Also, the use of virtual office technologies (such as facsimile and email) will also be considered and used where and when appropriate.

#### **2. Work-From-Home**

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster that impacts the operations of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and alternative sites at public buildings are also not accessible, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will work from home. The work-from-home strategy involves access to the office server via secure internet connection for primary operations. Minimum access to the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization office, if accessible, may occur.

### **B. Alternate Meeting Locations**

#### **1. Alternate Location**

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster that impacts the ability to conduct public hearing, public meeting and/or public workshops of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will coordinate with Alachua County and the City of Gainesville to make arrangements for alternate meeting locations. The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees, along with the media and outside agencies will be informed concerning any changes to meeting venues.

#### **2. Virtual Meetings via Communications Media Technology**

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster that severely impacts the ability to conduct public hearing, public meeting and/or public workshops of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees in any public building or appropriate publically-accessible private facility, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will coordinate with Alachua County and the City of Gainesville to make arrangements for virtual public meetings via communication media technology.

The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees, along with the media and outside agencies will be informed concerning any necessity for conducting virtual public meetings via communication media technology. Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will ensure that the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees have access to appropriate communication media technology to participate in their respective meetings.

### **3. Hybrid Meetings via Communications Media Technology and On-Site**

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster that impacts the ability to conduct public hearing, public meeting and/or public workshops of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees in any public building or appropriate publically-accessible private facility due to capacity limitations, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will coordinate with Alachua County and the City of Gainesville to make arrangements for hybrid on-site and virtual public meetings via communication media technology.

The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees, along with the media and outside agencies will be informed concerning any necessity for conducting hybrid public meetings on-site and via communication media technology. Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff will ensure that the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and its advisory committees have access to appropriate communication media technology to participate in their respective meetings.

Hybrid meeting will be conducted in compliance with the Sunshine Law and at Americans with Aisabilities Act.

# Chapter IV

## Back-Up of Storage Data

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## Chapter IV: Back-up of Storage Data

This section discusses how Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area (Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization) staff will provide for the protection and availability of electronic and hardcopy of documents, references, records, information systems and databases. This section accounts for the identification and protection of vital records and databases at both the primary facility and alternate facility. These vital records include personnel, social security, payroll, retirement, insurance and contracts.

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff have provided for the off-site backup of electronic records and databases. A maintenance program will be implemented to ensure the records are current.

### A. Work Products

A full tape backup of all work product data files is performed every Friday and those tapes are kept off-site. There are two sets of Friday tapes and they are rotated every other Friday. The Friday tapes are written over every other week. Monday through Thursday, new and changed files are backed up nightly and kept on the premises. These tapes are also overwritten.

A copy of all work product data files located on the server is performed every Friday on external hard drives and are kept off-site. There are two external hard drives and they are rotated every other Friday. The external hard drives are written over every other week.

### B. Essential Software

Important software connections and data system access that are considered essential, in order to maintain Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization operations, include the following:

Adobe Acrobat;

Citilabs Cube;

Corel Draw;

CyberLink Power DVD;

Environmental Systems Research Institute, ArcGIS Desktop;

Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Standard Urban Transportation Model Structure;

Florida Department of Transportation, Highway Capacity Manual;

Florida Department of Transportation, Level of Service Plan;

GoToMeeting;

Granicus Links;

Intuit QuickBooks Premier- Nonprofit;

Lotus 123;

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and Florida Department of Transportation, Gainesville Urbanized Area Transportation Study Model;

Microsoft Outlook- email;

Microsoft PowerPoint- presentations;

Microsoft Word;

Microsoft Access;

Microsoft Internet Explorer- internet access;

Microsoft Excel;

Olympus DSS Player Lite;

Symantec Endpoint Protection;

Windows Explorer- file management;

Windows 7;

WordPerfect- word processing; and

Zoom.

## C. Distribution Lists

Important software that are considered essential, in order to contact outside agencies, elected officials and other citizens about Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization information, include the following:

Microsoft Outlook- email; and

Microsoft Access- develop and maintain mail lists.

## D. Geographic Information System Data Layers

A full tape backup of Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization geographic information system data layers located on the server is performed every Friday and those tapes are kept off-site. There are two sets of Friday tapes and they are rotated every other Friday. The Friday tapes are written over every other week. Monday through Thursday, new and changed files are backed up nightly and kept on premises. These tapes are also overwritten.

A copy of all Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization geographic information system data layers located on the server is performed every Friday on external hard drives and are kept off-site. There are two external hard drives and they are rotated every other Friday. The external hard drives are written over every other week.

## E. Financial Records

A full tape backup of all Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization financial record data files located on the server is performed every Friday and those tapes are kept off-site. There are two sets of Friday tapes and they are rotated every other Friday. The Friday tapes are written over every other week. Monday through Thursday, new and changed files are backed up nightly and kept on the premises. These tapes are also overwritten.

A copy of all financial record data files located on the server is performed every Friday on external hard drives and are kept off-site. There are two external hard drives and they are rotated every other Friday. The external hard drives are written over every other week.

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# Chapter V

## Communication Lines

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## Chapter V: Communication Lines

The ability to communicate with outside agencies is imperative during a national, regional or local emergency. The primary communication system currently used by Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area (Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization) staff is the conventional office telephone system that is dependent on hardware circuits. Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff also has a backup system of wireless cellular telephones that can be used if the regular telephone system fails. This backup system has one loaner cell phone.

In addition to the telephone system, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization staff communicates with outside agencies and citizens using emails on the Internet and facsimile machine.

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# Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area

## *Continuity of Operations Plan Team*

Scott R. Koons, AICP, Executive Director

\*\* Lynn Godfrey, AICP, Transportation Disadvantaged Program Senior Planner

\* Michael Escalante, Senior Planner

\*\* Kevin Parrish, Information Technology and Property Management Director

\*\* Tara Tucker, Executive Assistant to the Executive Director

\* Primary Responsibility  
\*\* Secondary Responsibility



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your smart phone to visit  
our website!

**Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization  
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