

2011

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



The Lake~Sumter MPO provides a wide variety of professional transportation planning services to its two-county and nineteen city member governments. Between completing its on-going federally required duties and conducting a variety of special studies and projects, the MPO remained exceptionally busy throughout 2011. The list that follows documents some of the most notable accomplishments and achievements of the MPO over the last year, many setting a course for continued progress in 2012.

Safe Access to School Transportation Study

The MPO completed year one of this three year study. The primary goal of the study to produce a School Transportation Master Plan for the area within a two-mile radius of each public school within our planning region was completed for the Sumter County schools and one school in the City of Eustis. Phase 1 is 90% complete, Phase 2 is underway and the project website is active.

Congestion Management Process

We are proactively developing a Congestion Management Process (CMP) in anticipation of becoming a Transportation Management Areas (TMA) - metropolitan areas with population exceeding 200,000 - in 2012. At that time, a CMP will be necessary to meet federal requirements.

Regional Freight Study

To successfully and comprehensively conduct a freight study that addresses issues concerning the efficient movement of freight, goods and services, and efficient intermodal connections linking our roadway systems, seaports, airports, railroads and other freight handling facilities in a regional context, the Lake~Sumter MPO recognized the need for our effort to extend beyond our planning area boundary. MetroPlan Orlando also recognized the value in a regional effort and asked the Lake~Sumter MPO, Volusia TPO and Space Coast TPO to join their Freight, Goods and Services Study which was about to start. The Florida Department of Transportation has provided MetroPlan with additional funding so the study area can be sufficiently expanded to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing Central Florida's needs in dealing with movement of freight, goods and services.

Lake County 2020 Transit Development Plan 2011 Annual Update

The MPO served as Project Manager for the 2011 annual update to the Lake County 2020 Transit Development Plan (TDP). The TDP is Lake County's ten-year strategic planning, development and operations guide for providing public transportation.



Transportation 2035 Implementation

After approval of Transportation 2035 on December 8, 2010, the MPO has been busy with implementation activities. Presentations to chambers of commerce and citizen groups on our adopted long range transportation goals, objectives and strategies as well as providing technical assistance to our member governments with Evaluation and Appraisal Reports and mobility strategies have contributed to furthering our community vision that ties transportation investments to land use decisions through the 4C Process of directing new development to appropriate centers and corridors in order to preserve countryside and conservation lands on plan implementation.

State Road 50 Multi-Modal Corridor Study

As the MPO was preparing to adopt Transportation 2035 and start implementation activities, FDOT was starting a study based on the recognition of the need to manage land use differently to be able to address future transportation needs, exactly a main focal point of Transportation 2035. After discussions with MPO staff, the project was adjusted so the end result would be a tool to enhance Transportation 2035 implementation. MPO staff became actively involved in the project, providing guidance and support.

Transportation Management System

In 2007, the MPO started maintaining a centralized transportation concurrency management system to facilitate effective intergovernmental coordination on transportation facilities, ensuring level of service standards for transportation facilities were maintained throughout the two county region. The system has evolved into a consolidation of multiple databases including crash data, traffic counts, functional classification, roadway capacity, entitled and reserved trips, traffic impact study reviews, rezoning and comp plan amendment reviews and policy assistance and now is known as the Transportation Management System (TMS).

Traffic Count Program – The MPO has expanded the services of the TMS in 2011 to include a traffic count program. Lake County, Sumter County and the City of Wildwood used this new MPO service to collect their data and manage the project resulting in savings to each.

Web Crash Data Management System for the Lake~Sumter MPO Planning Area – The MPO maintains a comprehensive online data base, available to all member governments as part of the TMS package. The new crash data system has allowed the MPO to develop a more effective safety program, identifying and prioritizing locations most in need of safety countermeasures.

Pavement Management Program

The MPO successfully assisted Sumter County develop and implement a Pavement Management Program. It includes an analysis to determine required funding levels to maintain and improve overall pavement conditions, lists of candidate maintenance and rehabilitation projects, and a project prioritization process for the allocation of resurfacing funds. When the project was presented to the Governing Board and Committees the MPO offered the same service to all members to gain the benefit of economy of scale savings and a uniform regional way of assessing pavement condition.



Economic Preparedness

As economic conditions deteriorated, the MPO recognized that transportation projects can stimulate economic growth and job creation especially when land use decisions are part of the equation. To that end, the MPO focused on projects that catalyze private investment in the local economy by investing in transportation infrastructure.

Hills of Minneola White Paper

MPO staff drafted a white paper to help the City of Minneola develop a regional partnership to fund the construction of an interchange on Florida's Turnpike at the Hills of Minneola Development of Regional Impact. The plan would utilize the financing capabilities of Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) to leverage private capital and to solve broad regional transportation needs of both FTE and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), by partnering with local leadership and private investors to create a sustainable return on investment through job creation and enhanced property values.

Transportation Funding Needs

Because transportation funding is an integral part of the MPOs ability to accomplish its federally mandated duties, MPO staff, through the development of Transportation 2035, understand the shortfall in funding needed to complete all the transportation projects over the next 25 years, and the shortfall doesn't include maintenance. When Lake County formed the Capital Facilities Advisory Committee to address the County's transportation funding shortfall, the MPO shared its knowledge and expertise on funding options and revenue forecasting with the Committee, making informative presentations, providing detailed revenue forecast information for scenarios under consideration by the Committee, and serving as support staff when needed.

PD&E Projects

The MPO staff and committee members are very involved in the region's three PD&Es that were underway in 2011, as well as a fourth project that will kick off in 2012, participating in the selection process, attending public events, advising FDOT staff and consultants on community preferred outcomes, recommending creative alternatives and serving as Project Manager.

US 441 PD&E – The MPO has taken an active role in this study to ensure that access management issues are addressed to the satisfaction of the City of Mount Dora and Lake County while still meeting NEPA requirements.

SR 19 PD&E – The MPO is helping FDOT with public involvement and intergovernmental coordination.

SR 50 PD&E – The MPO provided support to the City of Groveland for this study, which that solidified the South Lake Trail alignment through downtown. The study also provided the City of Groveland with a blueprint to achieve their vision for downtown.

Wekiva Trail PD&E - The City of Mount Dora and Lake County requested that the MPO serve as Project Manager for this PD&E. MPO staff worked with FDOT to draft a scope of services and is preparing to start the study shortly.



Rail Initiatives

The MPO has been spearheading two rail initiatives for the last two years that require the formation of a coalition of funding partners in the Lake~Sumter planning area and the MetroPlan Orlando region. Our effort paid off when all involved parties agreed to make a financial contribute to both projects.

Alternatives Analysis for the US 441 Corridor (Orange Blossom Express)– The Lake~Sumter MPO formed a partnership between Lake County, Orange County, and the Cities of Eustis, Mount Dora, Tavares, Apopka and Orlando to contribute towards a 25% match FDOT required to fund the estimated \$1.7 Million study.

Freight Rail Upgrades – The Lake~Sumter MPO successfully lead an effort to form a partnership between Florida Central Railroad, Lake County, Orange County, and the Cities of Eustis, Mount Dora, Tavares, Apopka, Winter Garden, Ocoee and Orlando to fund a 25% match in the amount of \$4.6 Million required by FDOT to receive \$13.8 Million for railroad infrastructure upgrades from Umatilla to downtown Orlando.

Grants

This year, the MPO was very successful in its efforts to secure grants for our member governments and partners. Not all applications were successful, but the MPO is always on the lookout for grant opportunities and provides grant writing and grant writing assistance as a TMS service.

National Scenic Byway Grant Award \$685,000 – Application prepared by the Green Mountain Scenic Byway CME and supported by MPO staff for the Lake Apopka Loop Trailhead and Observation Tower. Lake County provided the grants required 20% match. Design is underway in FY 2011/12 and construction will commence in FY 2013/14.

National Scenic Byway Grant Award \$305,000 – MPO staff participated in the grant application submittal to develop the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway Corridor MasterPlan and subsequently served as the Project Manager.

FRA Rail Program for Capital Grants for Rail Line Relocation and Improvement Projects Award \$2.2 Million – Application written by MPO staff on behalf of the local governments who formed a partnership to contribute \$4.6 Million for the required 25% FDOT match for the upgrades to the Florida Central Railroad infrastructure from Umatilla to downtown Orlando.

