

Palm Beach
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Planning for the Palm Beaches



Regional Citizen's Advisory Committee Holds Third Annual Meeting

Members of respective Citizen Advisory Committees representing Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties held their Third Annual Meeting on the afternoon of June 13. The meeting, attended by more than forty people from the three MPOs, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) staff members, project consultants and the general public, was held at the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority's Executive Offices (SFRTA/Tri-Rail) in Pompano Beach.

The Regional Citizens Advisory Committee (RCAC) strives to provide important feedback to the three MPOs and the FDOT regarding transportation projects that cross county lines. They are charged with looking at these projects from a citizen's perspective and bring regional transportation issues to a wider audience.

A presentation was given by Randy Whitfield, Palm Beach MPO Director and Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee to the Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC) which was created by the three Southeast Florida MPOs in January, 2006. SEFTC's purpose is to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a separate administrative entity to serve as a forum for coordination and communica-

tion among the three MPOs, FDOT Districts 4 and 6, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, SFRTA, South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils, and other transportation agencies/organizations involved in planning. The duties of the SEFTC include the development of a Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, a process for prioritization of regional projects, a regional public involvement process and performance measures to assess the effectiveness of regional coordination activities. SEFTC can be found on the web at www.seftc.org.

An update was given by Mr. Whitfield regarding the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, and FDOT gave a progress report of the South Florida East Coast Corridor Transportation Analysis Study. All three PowerPoint presentations made at the Regional CAC meeting are available for viewing at www.miamidade.gov/mpo

Florida MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC) Executive Director, Howard Glassman gave an overview of the work of the MPOAC and the 2007 Transportation Legislation Summary of House Bill (HB) 985 recently signed into law.

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Regional CAC Continued...

The MPOAC is a statewide transportation planning and policy organization created by the Florida Legislature. It serves as the forum for collective policy discussion involving the twenty-six (26) MPOs in the cooperative transportation planning process.

Mr. Glassman described HB 985 presented to the Florida Legislature that clarifies the status and duties of MPOs throughout Florida. House Bill 985 states MPOs are separate from state and local governments. It also promotes participation of modal organizations in the metropolitan transportation planning process; increases the effectiveness of MPO Board member participation in the metropolitan transportation planning process and encourages investment in public transit. The Bill also included other

transportation provisions. House Bill 985 passed both the Florida House and Senate. It was signed by Governor Crist in June.

Lee Ann Jacobs, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), explained all MPOs are required to be recertified every four years in order to receive Federal funding. The Urbanized Area for South Florida includes Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties. Representatives from FHWA, Federal Transit Authority (FTA) and FDOT Districts 4 and 6 met with each MPO for a 3-day review process. Public comments cards were made available for anyone wishing to comment on the effectiveness of the MPO process. The final report may be available by the end of August.



RCAC Members listen to presentations and comments from committee members and interested public.



Commuter Challenge 2007 Winner

The Third Annual South Florida Commuter Challenge to keep single occupancy vehicles off the road and encourage alternative modes to commute was held Thursday, May 17, 2007. The event is sponsored by South Florida Commuter Services (SFCS), an organization under contract to Florida Department of Transportation and charged with promoting alternative modes of transportation for local commuters.

This year's challenge was led by a contingent of city, county and state employees from Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties. There were 8,013 South Floridians who took the Challenge with 4,776 being single occupant drivers. In Palm Beach County, 1,413 residents left their vehicles at home and either rode their bicycles, carpooled, or rode Tri-Rail or Palm Tran buses to work that day. Organizations taking part in the Challenge were Palm Beach County employees, Palm Beach MPO, School District of PBC, cities of Boca Raton, Delray Beach,

and West Palm Beach, Florida Department of Transportation, The Breakers Hotel and Resort, Boca Community Hospital and Tenet Corporation.

A follow-up survey conducted by SFCS found that seventy-five percent of solo-driving commuters responded that using alternative modes was a positive experience. Participants identified high gas prices and traffic as reasons for taking the Challenge.

Now the news you've waited for! The Grand Prize Winner of the 2007 Commuter Challenge is Brianne Barclay from Florida International University, who carpooled on May 17 in lieu of driving alone. She received two airline tickets courtesy of Spirit Airlines to any destination in the United States, and will receive free gasoline for one year if she continues to carpool to work three times or more per week. Sign up today with SFCS so you can begin saving money and the environment - www.1800234ride.com.

Did You Know?

- An Inherently Low-Emission Vehicle (ILEV) or "hybrid vehicle" that is certified and labeled in accordance with federal regulations may be driven in a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane at any time, regardless of its occupancy?
- HOV decals can be obtained from the Florida Department of Motor Vehicles and must be renewed annually?
- To save time, money and the environment, South Florida Vanpool will help your employees find a viable transportation alternative? Contact the MPO office at 561.684.4170 for information.
- Another energy-saving transportation alternative is to car-pool? South Florida Commuter Services offers valuable tips on their website www.1800234RIDE.com.
- Palm Tran announced service modifications proposed for October 2007? For route information contact Palm Tran's Customer Service at 561.841.4287 or access their website www.pbcgov.com/palmtran.

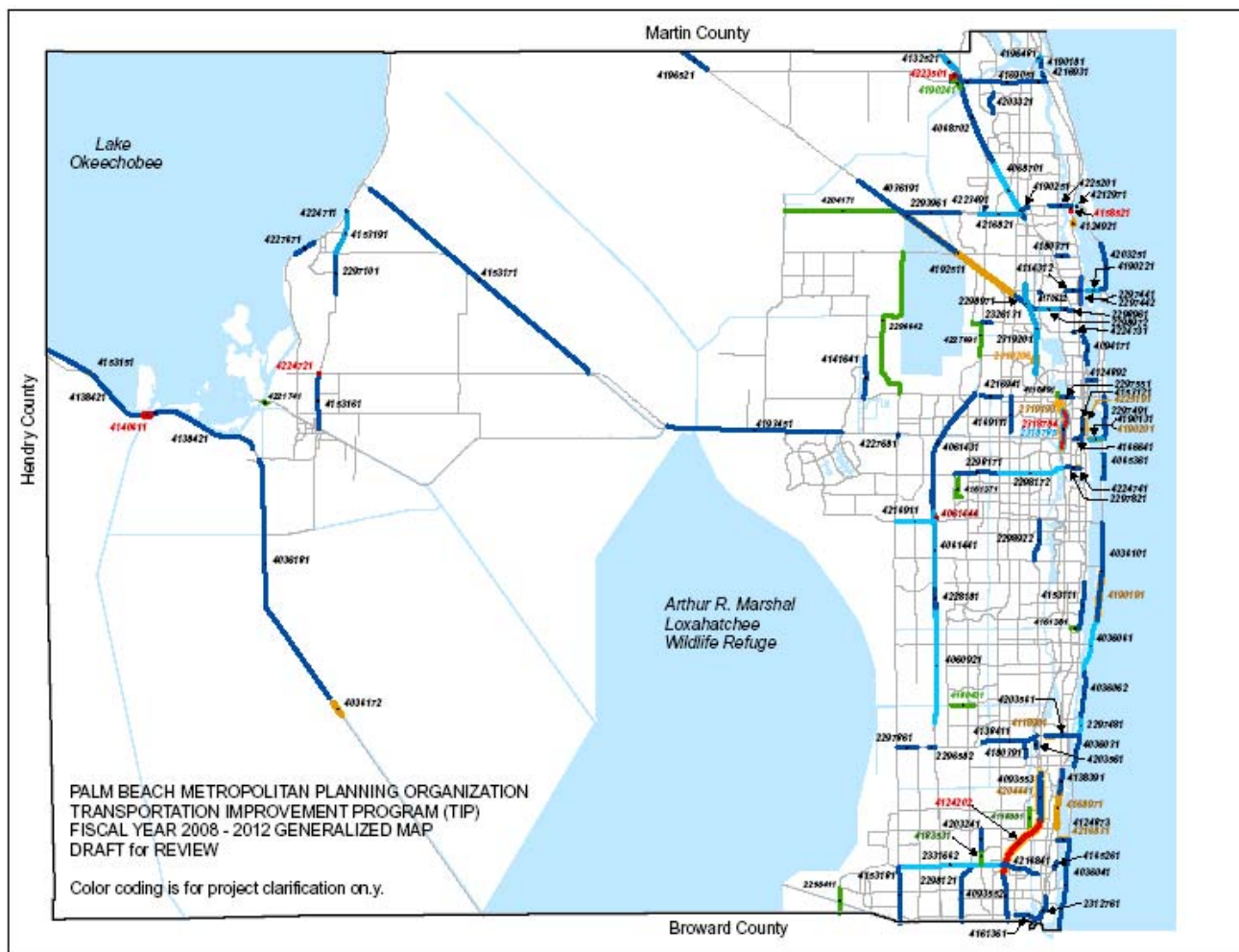


MPO Board Approves 2008-2012 TIP

The MPO Board approved the 2008–2012 Transportation Improvement Program at its June 21st meeting. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) addresses all modes of transportation including air travel (Palm Beach International Airport), rail (South Florida Regional Transportation Authority [SFRTA/Tri-Rail]), Port of Palm Beach, and the County-wide Five Year Road Program. The TIP is based on the Florida Department of Transportation's Annual Work Program using information provided by FDOT for project phases, schedules, cost estimates and funding sources.

The TIP is developed using established priorities adopted by the MPO at its September meeting.

Those priorities are reviewed by FDOT staff to determine federal and state funding allocations for Palm Beach County. The Department's Work Program is reviewed by the Florida Transportation Commission, who then submits it to the Florida Legislature for approval. The adopted TIP is submitted to FDOT for review. Florida's Transportation Secretary notifies local DOT districts when a TIP for the area is approved. During this process, projects are often moved to a more favorable funding position with MPO approval. A TIP Amendment must meet FDOT approval in order to be finalized. The approved TIP can be found on the MPO website at www.pbcgov.com/mpo



Indian Trail Improvement District Advocates Non-Motorized Transportation

Recognizing that developing a non-motorized transportation network and recreational trails are core components to increasing a community's quality of life, the Indian Trail Improvement District recently approved a Recreational Trails Committee to address the needs of equestrians, bicyclists and hikers.

Given the numerous canal corridors that lie within the District, the community stands at an advantageous position to create a system that serves the recreational needs of its constituents. Furthermore, since the District has ownership along the canals, property acquisition does not present a major hurdle in the development process.

The initiative to develop a trail system was initially conceived to identify routes to take equestrian enthusiasts out of automobile traffic and provide a safer place in which to ride, where automobile conflicts are minimized. However, as further discussions ensued, advocates realized shared-use pathways represent the best service to the community, as all non-motorized recreation and transportation needs can be met. Moreover, the



multi-use approach strengthens the ability of the community to obtain financial resources to implement projects.

Currently, the Committee and the District are in the planning stages of this effort. They are identifying a preliminary network that creates logical connections between various amenities such as schools and parks, and will eventually branch out to provide comprehensive connections throughout the community and tie into the Northeast Everglades Natural Area (NENA) regional network.

Bret Baronak, the MPO's Bicycle, Greenways and Pedestrian planner is active in providing technical assistance and other guidance as the District moves forward with their initiative.

Committee meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month at the District office. They are open to the public. For more information, please contact Bob Mearns, District Administrator at 793-0874, or Bret Baronak at 684-4163.



Central PBC Corridor Study Completed

The Central PBC Corridor Study has been concluded with MPO Board approval of the recommended route. Last year the MPO initiated the Study in cooperation with South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA). The study area extended from State Road 7 to downtown West Palm Beach and north of Okeechobee Boulevard, south to Forest Hill Boulevard. The Study reviewed existing and projected traffic volumes and roadway networks. After several public information meetings conducted by the consultant, Parsons Brinckerhoff, meetings

with stakeholders, MPO and SFRTA staff, Alternative #1 met with MPO Board approval. Alternative #1 route originates at the Wellington Mall, north along State Road 7, and east on Okeechobee Boulevard to the Tri-Rail station on Parker Avenue. The route would then continue to Banyan Boulevard downtown West Palm Beach and finally to Dixie Highway. Initial service would operate at 20-minute headways once funding is available. The Executive Summary of the Study can be reviewed on the MPO website at www.pbcgov.com/mpo.



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