

Miami Urbanized Area (UZA)/Transportation Management Area (TMA)

Joint Report on 2006 State Certification Review Miami-Dade, Broward County and Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Prepared by Florida Department of Transportation Districts Four and Six

Introduction

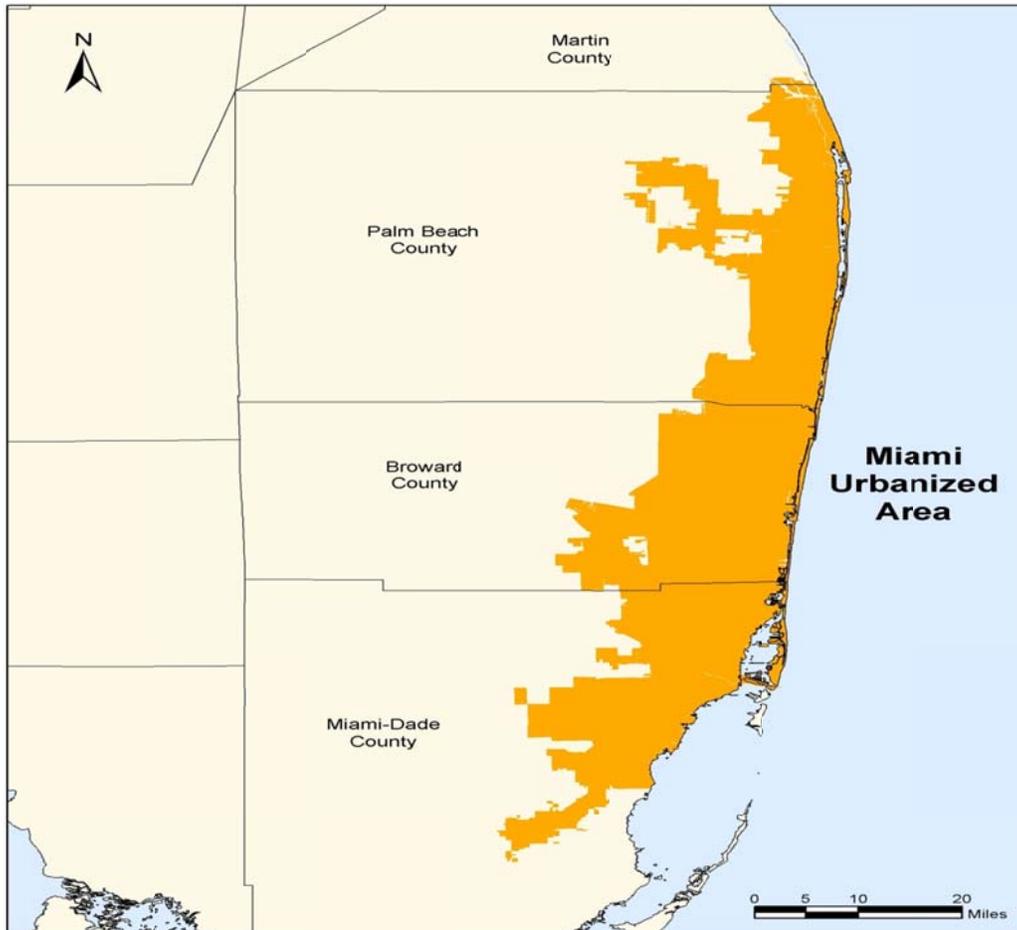
The Miami-Dade, Broward County and Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), as multiple MPOs for the Miami UZA/TMA shown in Map 1, share responsibility for ensuring that major issues in their combined metropolitan planning areas are addressed and that requirements in state and federal law governing the metropolitan transportation planning process are met. They also share responsibility for ensuring that the enhanced regional coordination commitments they made, in trade for staying separate following the last decennial census, result in effective regional level planning and improvements to the regional transportation system. Certification reviews are the tool used to determine whether the MPOs are fulfilling these responsibilities. They are conducted annually by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and every four years by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration for MPOs in TMAs.

Modified state certification reviews were conducted for the three MPOs with a focus on assessing progress made in meeting the following enhanced regional coordination commitments:

- Development and implementation of a regional long range transportation plan (RLRTP) for the tri-county region
- Development and implementation of a regional prioritization process, yielding a single list of prioritized regionally significant projects for the tri-county region
- Development and implementation of a regional public involvement process to build public understanding and awareness of the region and regional transportation issues and opportunities
- Continuation of regional-level air quality planning efforts
- Generation of regional land use strategies with the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils (RPCs)
- Utilization of performance measures to assess the effectiveness of enhanced regional coordination efforts.

The three MPOs were asked to provide one set of responses, developed collaboratively, to questions comprising an Enhanced Regional Coordination Checklist. Their completed checklist, which is attached, served as a key source for preparation of this joint report. The completed checklist and joint report reflect consultations among and between staffs of the three MPOs and Districts Four and Six.

Map 1
Miami Urbanized Area/Transportation Management Area



Note: Metropolitan planning area boundaries for the three MPOs match county boundaries (tri-county region).

Findings

The completed checklist documents long-standing informal coordination among the three MPOs in various areas, steps taken since 2003 to meet enhanced regional coordination commitments, and establishment of the Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC) in January 2006 to formalize regional transportation planning and coordination efforts and to tap into new state Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funds. This section provides an overview of progress made and provides the basis for the recommendations presented in the next section.

Regional Long Range Transportation Plan

A common regional element was selected as the initial RL RTP to accommodate work already under way on 2030 LRTPs for the three MPOs with an adoption deadline of December 2004. Components of the element, developed by an RL RTP committee consisting of representatives of the MPOs, the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA), Districts Four and

Six, and the RPCs, are regional goals and objectives, corridors of regional significance (map and designation criteria), and regionally significant project lists. The three MPOs and SEFTC have approved the components. The remaining step is finalization and incorporation of the regional element into the 2030 LRTPs.

Regional Project Prioritization

The MPOs utilized a compilation approach drawing on their separately developed 2030 LRTPs and priorities to produce a list of candidate regional projects for FY 06/07 TRIP funds. Use of TRIP funds is subject to statutory eligibility and priority criteria, with preference being given initially to production-ready projects. Work on development of a process that will address all regionally significant projects and their prioritization from a regional perspective has started. Also, the MPOs plan to develop a process for ensuring that regionally significant projects and priorities are clearly reflected in their Transportation Improvement Programs.

Regional Public Involvement

Regional public involvement activities are largely being undertaken as a part of individual MPO public involvement processes and include regular meetings of the public information officers for the three MPOs. Two well-received combined citizen advisory committee meetings have been held. Also, the MPOs have begun providing coordinated public involvement support for selected regional-scale projects (e.g., South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit Analysis Study).

Regional Land Use Strategies

The completed checklist highlights four initiatives involving land use and transportation with participation by the RPCs that are located primarily in Broward or Palm Beach counties. There are good examples of transportation and land use initiatives with regional implications in Miami-Dade County that could be added, including the North Corridor (NW 27th Avenue) rail station area planning and design charrettes and the Golden Glades Multi-Modal Terminal public-private joint use development proposal. In addition to working with the MPOs, the RPCs have interlocal agreements with the SFRTA to enhance strategic planning policy as it relates to transportation/transit and land use in the tri-county region. Regional land use strategies will be implemented through local government comprehensive plans, RPC strategic regional policy plans, and other plans that address transportation and land use connections. More clarity is needed on how the varied efforts, planned or under way, will fit together to promote coordinated and wise transportation investment and land use decisions from a regional perspective.

Regional Performance Measurement

One set of performance measures has been developed in the form of measures of effectiveness for regional objectives in the initial RL RTP (e.g., total vehicle miles traveled and number of new transit oriented developments in region). A threshold value is to be set for each measure to allow them to be used. Another set of performance measures is envisioned to capture whether the enhanced regional planning and coordination efforts being undertaken by the MPOs are resulting in systematic improvements to the regional transportation system tied to supportive land uses. The completed checklist identifies activities to initiate development of this set of performance measures.

Pace of Progress

The completed checklist does not identify, explore or propose ways to overcome barriers that have impeded the pace of progress in meeting enhanced regional coordination commitments.

Recommendations

The following recommendations, in no priority order, apply to the Miami-Dade, Broward County and Palm Beach MPOs.

- (1) Finalize the regional element constituting the initial RL RTP and incorporate it by amendment into the 2030 LRTPs for the three MPOs. Consider publishing the element in a brochure format to facilitate wider distribution and awareness of the element.
- (2) By December 2006, define what will constitute the next generation RL RTP and set out how it will be developed in coordination with Districts Four and Six, the SFRTA and the RPCs.
- (3) Continue working with Districts Four and Six to update the Southeast Florida Regional Planning Model both to support development of the next generation RL RTP and to meet other multimodal demand forecast modeling needs.
- (4) Develop and implement a regional project prioritization process able to generate a single multimodal list of prioritized regionally significant projects for the tri-county region in coordination with the SFRTA and other partners. This process is expected to incorporate TRIP project identification and prioritization and evolve over time. It also is expected to be coordinated with individual MPO prioritization processes.
- (5) Develop and publish a general regional public involvement plan designed to build public understanding and awareness of the tri-county region and regional transportation issues and opportunities. This plan, with current efforts as a foundation, should provide for continuous and consistent engagement of the public and complement public involvement efforts conducted for specific projects (e.g., RL RTP development). In addition, the plan should be evaluated periodically for effectiveness and updated as warranted. Consider creating a web site for SEFTC along the lines of the web site for the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee (www.ccctransportation.org).
- (6) Provide regular updates on regional planning and coordination efforts to MPO advisory committees and boards and post them on individual MPO web sites.
- (7) Work with the RPCs and other partners to develop and implement an overall strategy for improving the integration of transportation and land use in the tri-county region.
- (8) Consider developing regional performance measures with regional and state partners that have a role in the regional transportation system. One way to engage those partners is through the Florida Indicators Network. The network is assisting the Century Commission

for a Sustainable Florida in developing a common set of indicators that can be used to assess progress in implementing regional goals and visions.

(9) To take regional planning and coordination efforts to the next level, consider developing a five-year SEFTC work plan and exploring staffing and technical support approaches that would best support its implementation (e.g., co-funding a shared regional planner position). Also, use identical language for shared regional planning and coordination activities in the three Unified Planning Work Programs.

Districts Four and Six remain partners with the MPOs, ready to assist in the implementation of these recommendations by sharing and clarifying expectations, contributing expertise and providing technical support.