

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

2008 Regional Report

Prepared for Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Southeast Florida Transportation Council

Prepared by Florida Department of Transportation

Executive Summary

This report is the third in a series of annual regional reports prepared by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the multi-county Miami UZA/TMA. The reports document the progress the Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), including through the Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC), have been making in addressing transportation issues and opportunities from a regional perspective. Relationships among the MPOs have continued to grow along with relationships between the MPOs and their other partners, including FDOT. SEFTC will have a “regional story” to share once its first stand-alone regional long range transportation plan is completed in early 2010. Additional steps will need to be taken to allow the various challenges tied to transportation facing the region to be effectively addressed.

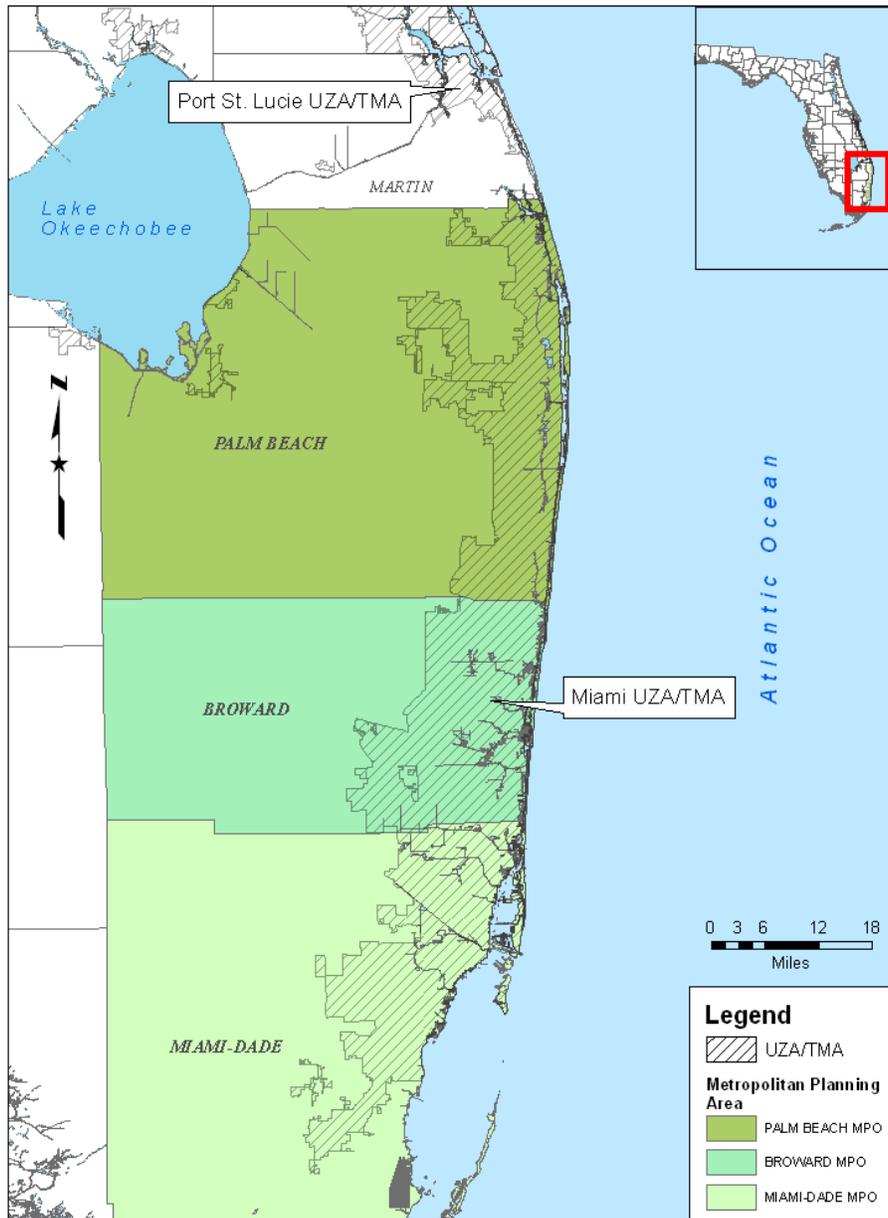
Introduction

The Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach MPOs, as multiple MPOs for the Miami UZA/TMA, 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 following enhanced regional coordination commitments, made in trade for being able to stay separate after the last decennial census, result in effective regional level planning and systematic improvements to the regional transportation system:

- 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 established SEFTC in January 2006 to formalize their regional transportation planning and coordination efforts and to tap into new state Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funds. In 2007, SEFTC established a technical advisory committee, the Regional Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (RTTAC), and created a Regional Modeling Subcommittee. The tri-county region served by the three MPOs and SEFTC is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Miami Urbanized Area/Transportation Management Area



Metropolitan planning areas for the three Miami UZA/TMA MPOs match county boundaries, creating a tri-county region.

The Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), consisting of Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties and more than 100 municipalities, is the 7th largest MSA in the United States. It had an estimated population of 5,414,772 in 2008, an 8.1% increase over 2000. Since the developed area within the MSA is situated within a relatively long and narrow strip between the Atlantic Ocean and the environmentally-sensitive Everglades, most major road and transit routes run north-south. The MSA is served by three international airports and four ports, three of which are deep water ports.

In prior years, FDOT assessed progress being made by the three MPOs in meeting their enhanced regional coordination commitments as part of annual state certification reviews. In 2008, FDOT decided to separate the regional reports documenting assessment results from the certification review packages. This decision reflects the ultimate purpose for which the regional reports will be used, namely as a source of information on the effectiveness of the MPOs' regional alliance when MPO designations are revisited in Florida after the next (2010) decennial census. The regional reports will continue to be shared with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for consideration during federal certification reviews, which explore whether MPOs are addressing major issues facing metropolitan areas.

In 2008, the three MPOs updated their responses to an Enhanced Regional Coordination Checklist and FDOT convened a regional meeting for discussion of efforts made to implement the recommendations in the prior regional report. This regional report draws on the updated checklist (copy attached), input received at the regional meeting, and a review of various related documents (SEFTC meeting agendas, regional public involvement plan, etc.).

Findings

The updated 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 SEFTC. 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 that already was 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), FDOT 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 approved each of the components. With work under way on a 2035 RL RTP, the remaining step of finalizing and incorporating the common regional element into the 2030 LRTPs by amendment is not expected to be completed.

The latest version of the Southeast Florida Regional Planning Model (SERPM 6.5), validated using 2005 data, is supporting development of individual MPO 2035 LRTPs and a 2035 RL RTP. Development of a request for proposals (RFP) for the 2035 RL RTP was coordinated through the RTTAC, and a Regional Project Management Team was formed to help guide and facilitate plan development. The Regional Modeling Subcommittee has been effective in ensuring delivery of sound data for running the SERPM and timely consideration and resolution of novel modeling issues. The deliverables leading to a RL RTP document, such as updated regional goals and objectives and revisions to the designated regional transportation network (corridors of regional significance), are being vetted through the RTTAC before going to SEFTC. Completion of a regional Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Measures (TCQSM) analysis is part of the planning effort. The four plans are being coordinated with each other, with a regional freight study being developed collaboratively by the three MPOs and FDOT, and with other plans for the tri-county region (e.g., SFRTA's Strategic Regional Transit Plan).

The 2035 RL RTP is expected to incorporate regional level greenway planning efforts initiated by SEFTC in 2007 toward the goal of establishing a viable regional non-motorized transportation system that reflects environmental features and complements roadway and transit systems in the tri-county region. An opportunity to link these efforts north is available through the Regional Greenways and Trails Working

Group created by the Treasure Coast RPC in 2008. The efforts of this working group are focused on Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River counties as well as interconnections into adjacent counties.

The 2035 RL RTP scope of work contains a Regional Visioning Activity that provides for monitoring and coordinating with Southeast Florida 2060 regional visioning efforts initiated by the South Florida and Treasure Coast RPCs. Those efforts have been slowed by various factors and continue to evolve in terms of timing and approach. As a result, the “continuing support” provision in the RL RTP RFP may need to be invoked to ensure effective coordination of regional level transportation planning and visioning efforts over the short and longer terms. This coordination is particularly important for purposes of addressing regional land use patterns in relation to major transportation investments needed to support mobility at the regional level. Also, the MPOs will be expected to participate in efforts initiated by FDOT to develop a system-oriented, multi-county mobility plan centered on I-95 and its parallel transit corridor, Tri-Rail.

Regional Project Prioritization

As shared with SEFTC, the continuing expectation of FDOT is that the three MPOs, in coordination with their regional partners, will develop a transparent, defensible regional project prioritization process and use it to rank all projects on the regional transportation network through the planning horizon year. This approach provides the long-term system level view needed to ensure that improvements are made in a systematic and equitable fashion and in a manner that best implements regional goals and objectives. Having a regional plan with regional project priorities provides a basis for advocating for additional resources for the region, particularly at the regional, state and federal levels.

Use of TRIP funds is subject to statutory eligibility and priority criteria, with preference being given initially to production-ready projects. The MPOs utilized a compilation approach drawing on their separately developed 2030 LRTPs and priorities to produce a SEFTC list of candidate regional projects for FY 06/07 TRIP funds. FY 07/08 TRIP funds were allocated to regional projects in Broward and Palm Beach counties that had been ranked using a scoring system tied to the regional goals and objectives developed for the initial RL RTP. The Broward and Palm Beach project list and a project list for Miami-Dade were presented to SEFTC in October 2006, followed later by a list showing regional projects in all three counties organized by priority tier with the projects in each tier listed in county alphabetical order. One list of ranked regional projects for the tri-county region was generated for the FY 08/09 TRIP funding cycle and for the FY 09/10 to FY 11/12 TRIP funding cycle using an interim regional project prioritization process. This process was developed through the RTTAC and with consultant assistance from FDOT. It ranks regional projects using criteria organized into two tiers, with one addressing the cost-benefit ratio and the other addressing project-readiness and safety, multi-modal and regional connectivity benefits.

The interim regional project prioritization process is being refined and updated as part of development of the 2035 RL RTP and will be closely tied to implementation of regional goals and objectives. As indicated above, all projects on the regional transportation network through the planning horizon year need to be ranked using this process. The MPOs have committed to developing, but have not yet developed, a process to ensure regional projects and priorities are clearly and consistently reflected in their Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs).

Regional Public Involvement

Regional public involvement activities have largely been undertaken as a part of individual MPO public involvement processes and include regular meetings of the public outreach coordinators for the three MPOs as the Regional Public Involvement Management Team (RPIMT). A Regional Citizens Advisory Committee (RCAC), comprised of members of the CACs for the three MPOs, continues to meet annually. Initial plans called for it to meet semiannually during development of the 2035 RL RTP. Members expressed interest in having the RCAC become a recognized advisory committee to SEFTC at the 2008

annual meeting. SEFTC did not choose to take that step but expressed interest in utilizing videoconferencing and other technological tools to support cost-effective and broader participation in meetings. It has a logo and it upgraded its web site in 2008 using a shared regional consultant (www.seftc.org).

The RPIMT completed a Regional Public Involvement Plan, which was approved by SEFTC in July 2008. The plan both sets out a general structure for regional level efforts and covers particular projects, including incorporation of 2035 RL RTP information into public involvement efforts conducted for the individual MPO 2035 LRTPs and coordination on public involvement conducted for regional-scale projects (e.g., South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit Analysis Study). It does not specifically address engagement of groups and organizations, such as business and economic development groups, with interests in regional level transportation planning issues and activities. Measures of effectiveness to support periodic evaluations of plan effectiveness, followed by plan updates as warranted, have not yet been identified.

One particularly noteworthy development is the commitment made by the Broward and Palm Beach MPOs, as reflected in their FY 2008/09 – FY 2009/10 Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs) approved in 2008, to expand the Integrated Transportation Information System (ITIS) created for the Miami-Dade MPO by Florida International University to cover the whole tri-county region (by April 2011). The ITIS is an interactive web-based tool which provides social, economic and geographic characteristics useful to identifying effective public involvement strategies and accomplishing stated Title VI goals.

Regional Land Use Strategies

The updated checklist highlights four initiatives involving land use and transportation with participation by the RPCs primarily in Broward or Palm Beach counties. One of the initiatives, the State Road (SR) 7 Collaborative, involves municipalities on a cross-county basis. An example of a transportation and land use initiative with regional implications in Miami-Dade County is the Golden Glades Multi-Modal Terminal for which a public-private joint design-build criteria package has been developed. 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 continues to be 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.

The link between transportation and land use on SR 7, a corridor of regional significance, emerged as a critical issue following actions taken by Palm Beach County and the Palm Beach MPO to remove a long-planned connection of University Drive in Broward County to Glades Road in Palm Beach County. University Drive, along with SR 7, is one of a limited number of north-south corridors of regional significance west of Florida's Turnpike that also extends south into Miami-Dade County. The brunt of impacts from removal of the University Drive connection falls on the segment of SR 7 north of Sample Road in Broward County to Glades Road. There has been a mix of support for and opposition to the removal by local governments in Broward County. Land use changes, along with transportation investments, will be needed to make transit a viable mobility option on this segment using dedicated transit lanes. In January 2008, the Palm Beach and Broward MPOs adopted a three-step action plan to address the situation as proposed by FDOT (transportation network needs assessment, common vision for SR 7 crossing county line, implementation strategy). Work on the second and third steps is continuing.

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). Threshold values needed to allow those measures to be used were not set. The MPOs are revisiting performance measures in conjunction with the update to the regional goals and objectives for the 2035 RL RTP. Also, they remain open to working with partners on development of another set of performance measures that can help capture whether their enhanced regional planning and coordination efforts are leading to systematic improvements to the regional transportation system linked to other desired outcomes, such as sound use and reuse of land.

Pace of Progress and Evolving Challenges and Opportunities

The three MPOs took a major step in 2008 when they retained one consultant, through the Palm Beach MPO, to develop the 2035 RL RTP and provide RTTAC and SEFTC meeting support through June 2010. With assistance from FDOT and at the request of FHWA, they also entered into a memorandum of understanding addressing joint funding arrangements for development of the 2035 RL RTP and the regional freight study. Work on the 2035 RL RTP, in particular, has yielded improvements in the productiveness of the working relationship among the MPOs. Two areas for improvement involve how shared regional tasks across UPWPs are worded and how regional level work is planned and funded over a multi-year period by the MPOs. The Palm Beach MPO has come closest in the latter area through its annual commitment to fund Regional Planning and Support in the five-year business plan in its UPWP. Applicable federal regulations address coordination requirements for multiple MPOs designated for single urbanized areas, as documented in UPWPs, and identify joint development of a single LRTP and TIP for the entire urbanized area as an option (23 CFR 450.314(d)).

Following established annual calendars for meetings, the RTTAC and SEFTC have become known forums for consideration of studies and initiatives that are regional in scale or otherwise important to the region. SEFTC also has become increasingly active in the organization of summits on transportation issues. Outreach efforts are needed to build regular participation by newer members of the RTTAC (e.g., representatives of county transit agencies). SEFTC, which consists of one representative from each MPO, has sought ways to promote full member participation at all of its meetings. Additional ways of promoting participation, while adding perspectives and increasing exposure to SEFTC, warrant exploration. As one example, the Treasure Coast Transportation Council's membership structure, with two representatives each from the Martin and Indian River County MPOs and the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization, has proven to be effective.

Two developments of interest to the region served by SEFTC are formation of the Florida Urban Transportation Coalition (FUTC) in 2008, led by Metroplan Orlando, and efforts relating to megaregions, led by an organization called America 2050. The concept for the FUTC emerged from a collective interest to find "common ground" with transportation and business leaders in Florida's four major metropolitan areas – Jacksonville, Central Florida, Tampa Bay and South Florida. America 2050 has identified 11 emerging megaregions, including one in Southern Florida (42 counties), where the majority of growth through 2050 is expected to occur. Megaregions are networks of metropolitan areas connected by travel patterns, economic links, shared natural resources, and social and historical commonalities. One initiative supported by America 2050 is development of a national strategy for building and managing infrastructure systems, including the transportation system.

As exemplified by the SR 7/University Drive situation discussed above, continued efforts to find better ways to address cross-jurisdictional issues are needed. Additional challenges and opportunities lie in the need for multiple entities, including MPOs, to collaboratively and effectively address climate change and gear up for effective implementation of the federal surface transportation act that will replace SAFETEA-LU. The state statute governing MPOs was amended in 2008 to add a provision encouraging MPOs "to

consider strategies that integrate transportation and land use planning to provide for sustainable development and reduce greenhouse gas emissions” in their LRTPs (see ss. 339.175(7), FS). These subjects will be addressed in more detail in the 2009 regional report.

Recommendations

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

- (1) Ensure completion of the 2035 RL RTP by February 2010, coordinating with all regional partners, and identify and provide “continuing support” needed to supplement the effort and ensure timely and effective implementation of the new plan.
- (2) Participate in regional initiatives such as the mobility planning efforts centered on I-95 and its parallel transit corridor, Tri-Rail.
- (3) Continue working with FDOT on the SERPM to support long range transportation planning and meet other multimodal travel demand forecasting needs. Particular focal areas are as follows:
 - *Travel Behavior Analysis to Identify Trend of Travel Decision Making*
The MPOs and FDOT, coordinating with other partners, should aggressively pursue opportunities for transit on-board surveys and other types of travel surveys. The findings from these surveys can be applied for modeling New Starts, alternative modes, user-paid highway special lanes and other transportation investments.
 - *Demographic Analysis*
The MPOs and FDOT, coordinating with other partners, should identify and implement means of capturing trends from demographic changes and their travel demand implications in subareas of the tri-county region. With that information, the model can be effectively adjusted to reflect the needs of local governments or other entities when it is applied for local projects.
 - *Support for Continuing Evolution of Model*
The MPOs and FDOT should monitor the latest demand forecast modeling concepts and assess their applicability and appropriateness for inclusion in the SERPM.
- (4) Review regional visioning efforts under way or completed for other regions, including ones in Florida (e.g., myregion.org in Central Florida). Promote and participate in regional visioning and other regional level planning efforts, including in conjunction with development and implementation of the 2035 RL RTP and planning for the next generation RL RTP.
- (5) Refine and update the regional project prioritization process and use it to generate a single multimodal list of prioritized regionally significant projects for the tri-county region through the 2035 planning horizon in coordination with all regional partners. This process should provide for TRIP project identification and prioritization (as a subset of ranked projects) and is expected to continue evolving over time. It also is expected to be coordinated with individual MPO prioritization processes.
- (6) Develop and implement a process to ensure regional projects and priorities are clearly and consistently reflected in the TIPs for the three MPOs. Consistent narrative covering regional project prioritization and use of TRIP funds in the tri-county region should appear in the TIPs.

- (7) Expand efforts to identify public and private funding partners to leverage funds available for regional projects, particularly under the TRIP. Also, identify and pursue options and approaches for increasing funding available for regional projects, including in conjunction with development of the 2035 RL RTP.
- (8) Continue implementing the Regional Public Involvement Plan and supplement it to include measures of effectiveness and provide for periodic evaluations using those measures followed by plan updates as warranted. The core purpose of this plan should remain building, through continuous and consistent engagement, public understanding and awareness of the tri-county region and regional transportation issues and opportunities. The public, as used here, includes the various groups and organizations with interests in regional level transportation planning issues and activities. Ensure that ITIS is expanded across the tri-county region. Continue upgrades to the SEFTC web site, such as additions of information on regional features, demographics and travel patterns.
- (9) Provide regular updates on regional planning and coordination efforts to MPO advisory committees and boards and post them on individual MPO web sites. Explore additional ways to increase MPO advisory committee interest and involvement in regional level efforts.
- (10) Continue to 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.
- (11) Ensure that the performance measures for regional objectives in the 2035 RL RTP will be used by ensuring that threshold values for them are set and a mechanism for monitoring and reporting on them is put into place. Continue to be open to working with partners that have a role in the regional transportation system on efforts to identify and track regional performance measures.
- (12) Explore increasing the membership of SEFTC to provide for at least two representatives from each MPO.
- (13) Explore means to enhance SEFTC's level of engagement in areas such as addressing cross-jurisdictional issues, funding for regional projects and climate change.
- (14) Develop an annually updated five-year SEFTC work plan to guide the timing and delivery of regional level work, including RL RTP implementation and updates, over time. Also, identify and secure the staffing, technical and other support needed to implement the work plan. In addition, use consistent wording for shared regional tasks in the UPWPs for the three MPOs.

FDOT remains a partner with the MPOs, ready to assist in the implementation of these recommendations by sharing and clarifying expectations, contributing expertise and providing technical support.