



## **Florida Transportation Plan and Strategic Intermodal System Policy Plan Regional Workshop**

**Lee Tran  
3401 Metro Parkway  
Fort Myers, Florida 33916  
June 23, 2015**

### **Meeting Highlights**

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#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Laura Lockwood, Interim Director of the Southwest Area Office, FDOT District 1, welcomed everyone to the second of four Regional Workshops being held in the month of June. She thanked participants for taking the time to provide their input and then introduced Dana Reiding, FDOT Office of Policy Planning, asking her to review the process for updating the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP), Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Policy Plan, and the expectations for the Regional Workshop.

#### **Overview of FTP and SIS Policy Plan**

Dana gave a brief presentation on the purpose of the FTP and SIS Policy Plan, and the process for updating the plans. She then reviewed the agenda for the day, the contents of the folders each participant was given upon arriving, and explained how to provide additional comments to FDOT staff. She noted that a staff person from District 1 was available to answer any questions participants had about the SIS.

#### **Break Out Sessions**

Dana then told participants that the remainder of the workshop would be spent identifying concepts that staff would use to identify potential objectives to support the goal areas identified by the FTP/SIS Steering Committee. She also asked that participants provide their comment on the strategies that were identified by the FTP/SIS Steering Committee and FTP/SIS Advisory Groups. She asked participants to find their assigned break out group and begin their discussion.

The participants discussed the following concepts as they relate to the goal areas identified by the FTP/SIS Steering Committee and strategies that were defined by the FTP/SIS Steering Committee and the FTP/SIS Advisory Groups. At the end of the break out sessions, Dana asked participants to review the full list of concepts that staff had generated based on the group discussions. Participants were given eight adhesive dots and were asked to use them to indicate

which concepts they felt were most important. The most highly voted concepts are listed below:

**Goal Area: Safety & Security for Residents, Visitors, and Businesses**

Highest Rated Concepts:

- Design roads and trails with “complete streets” in mind.
- Educate new drivers, tourists, and seasonal visitors on sharing the road safely. Need to facilitate a cultural shift.

Additional Input Received on this Goal Area

- Educate population on the definition of ‘complete streets’.
- Educate public on how to safely move around the transportation system for all modes.
- Planning for autonomous vehicles will help with safety. We are learning about this as it evolves. Improvements need to take emerging technology into account.
- Need funding to address these safety issues.
- Take advantage of the rail we already have with trails parallel to rail, such as rails to trails to provide a safe place to ride.
- Complete streets are helpful but not the whole answer. We also need dedicated bike paths. Need public/private coordination to plan for these facilities so there is not duplication.
- Need ability to reverse highway direction in emergency situations.
- Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) is a good example of how to harden facility to weather an emergency situation, i.e. weather event. Monitoring traffic in real time to make adjustments as needed.
- Large limerock trucks can be a safety hazard. Also air quality issues with some trucks.
- Concern with residents, bicyclists and pedestrians being able to cross wide highways safely.
- More lighting is needed for pedestrians and bicyclists along these paths.
- Need more transportation facilities that are bike/ped friendly. So many facilities are multiple lane facilities not conducive to bikes and pedestrians.
- Road diets and lane reductions are good on appropriate facilities. This is difficult when the population continues to grow.

- Consider infrastructure needs for automated vehicles to ensure safety. The transition from traditional to automated will require planning.
- Education is needed to teach people how to use safety features like roundabouts.
- Need to fill in gaps in the bike/ped network to help with safety.
- Better education so people know how to use new engineering techniques like divergent diamond interchanges.
- We should separate the bike lane from the road to be safer.
- Need better education on bike/ped safety laws. Not many understand them.
- Need roads set up to handle emergency evacuation, keep the traffic flowing.
- Transit can be useful for moving people out during emergency evacuation.
- Need requirements for emergency generators so gas and other needs are available.
- Important to keep roads open so first responders can get in after the weather event. Portable generators are important.
- Good time to rebuild for the future but don't rebuild as it was, rebuild better to handle what may come in the future. Underground utilities for example.
- Plan the infrastructure to account for sea level rise.
- Roundabouts in some cases can cause backups which impacts safety.
- Need better timing at intersection crossings to help with safety of bikes and pedestrians also for flow of traffic.
- Better educate new drivers about how to share road with bikes and pedestrians Also for transient (visitor) populations.
- Need more crosswalks so all road users have a safe place to move.
- More education to reduce the number of distracted drivers. Need a cultural shift. More signage is needed is better direct people to locations.

#### **Goal Area: Agile, Resilient, and Quality Infrastructure Condition**

##### Highest Rated Concepts:

- Need more flexible funding to maintain quality infrastructure.
- Agile infrastructure to make quick transfers from air to rail or road.

##### Input Received on this Goal Area

- Implement intelligent transportation systems technology to interconnect the region with multiple agencies i.e., FDOT with local law enforcement, etc. so users can make better travel decisions.
- Use WAZE app to make better travel decisions (learn incident locations, WAZE mobile application, etc.)
- Consider sea level rise and how it will impact transportation system.
- Roundabouts work when there is no electricity.
- Have infrastructure in place to make transfers/connections from air to rail to road.
- Need to improve the transparency of transportation planning. Need to have public meetings that are in locations that can be easily and conveniently accessed by the public.
- Seems to be a gap between public workshops to what actually happens at construction. May need to have periodic check ins as project moves towards construction.
- Unmanned aerospace systems will have infrastructure requirements and we need to be prepared for this.
- Funding is a key issue to keeping quality infrastructure. Will need new funding sources in the future to maintain infrastructure.
- Identify different revenue sources other than gas tax.

#### **Goal Area: Efficient and Reliable Mobility for People and Freight**

##### Highest Rated Concepts:

- Provide incentives for vehicles using alternatives to traditional transportation fuels.
- Encourage the use of transit and shared vehicles.
- Promote intermodal and multimodal connectivity.

##### Input Received on this Goal Area

- Encourage use of public transit and shared vehicles.
  - Explore airport transit connections in other areas.
- Reduce congestion and eliminate bottlenecks.
- Promote better rail connectivity.
- Incentivize the use of vehicles that use alternatives to traditional transportation fuels.

- Improve and connect statewide freight transportation infrastructure.
- Promote intermodal and multimodal connectivity. Make it easier for people to connect between modes.
- Streamline financial transactions into universal fare system. Consider using the funding generated from rental cars to provide public transit to airports.
- Increase the frequency of transit service to reduce wait times.
- Better educate public about transit options.
- More effective utilization of the grid system through technological advancements that provide incident notices, intelligent transportation systems, etc.
- Proactively preserve and acquire right of way for new rail corridors. Provide a deadline for local governments to include the project in the comprehensive plans.
- Move students from school busses to public transit. Funding currently used on school busing could be used to support public transit. Children are more comfortable using public transit.
  - From a safety standpoint, it may only apply to high school students rather than elementary and middle school students.
- Reexamine fleet size of delivery vehicles. Reduce the amount of exhaust fumes from delivery vehicles, especially in residential areas.
- Put all the mailboxes on one side of the street, or in one central location to reduce the number of trips.
- Encourage the use of dual-mode vehicles (works on both the roadway and on the rail lines).
- Promote the use of the intercoastal waterway.
- For streamlining the regulatory process – Application process that stores the permit application in one space to make applying for additional permits more efficient. Use clearing house to store this information.
- Future planning for methods delivering fuel. Methods that promote environmental stewardship and efficiency.
- Provide more incentives for people to use a mode of transportation other than their personal automobile. Create communities that are more walkable. Things should be within a few miles of where people live.

- Increase the amount of freight we can move on the rail system, double-stacking for example.
- Evaluate height/weight regulations to allow for double-stacking trains. Improve infrastructure to ensure double-stacking is possible.
- Modify permitting process to reduce duplication. Create a master permit that is agreed upon by all agencies involved.
- Coordinate with private entities to ensure different modes of transportation are picking up and dropping off passengers in the same location.

### **Goal Area: More Transportation Choices for People and Freight**

#### Highest Rated Concepts:

- Offer transportation options that are appropriate for a variety of demographics.
- Design walkable, livable communities that support multimodal transportation options.

#### Input Received on this Goal Area

- Turn transit into a mode of choice rather than the last resort. Transit should be more convenient than using a personal automobile.
- Increase interregional travel options, such as bus, light rail, etc.
- Promote walkable livable communities that support multimodal transportation options.
- Promote the use of automated vehicles, including drones, to move freight in off-peak hours.
- Re-evaluate the transportation facilities that are eligible for SIS funding. Consider including more strategic facilities on the SIS. Including airports and intermodal transportation hubs.
- Promote coordination/partnerships between local and state governments and the private sector, especially related to the purchase of right of way and land use decisions.
- Partner with private companies, including those like UBER, to support transit systems and transportation disadvantaged trips.
- Provide transportation options that are appropriate for a variety of demographics, especially the aging population.
- Develop safe mixed-used paths/trails (bicycle and pedestrian) to promote connectivity between communities. More effective use of the existing road and rail right of way.

- Provide more funding options for transit. Redirecting existing sources may not be realistic. There would need to be additional funding sources (possibly national).
- More equitable distribution of funding across the state. Consider the return on investment when distributing funding.
- Consider additional funding sources to support operations of transit systems as well as capital investment.
- Partner with companies and schools to stagger starting times of work and school to reduce the number of people on the system at one time.
- Incorporate active transportation management and transportation demand management.

### **Goal Area: Transportation Solutions to Support Florida's Global Economic Competitiveness**

#### Highest Rated Concepts:

- Need to be more receptive to foreign markets, especially potential new markets like Cuba.
- Provide more east-west rail connectivity.
- Provide multimodal transportation options to connect regions and metro-areas.

#### Input Received on this Goal Area

- Economically viable and receptive for new foreign markets, such as Cuba. Include tourism.
- Identify existing and potential new transportation hubs. Promote multimodal connectivity between these hubs and hubs in other regions.
- Increase east-west rail connectivity.
- Companies are interested in live, learn, work, play communities. Develop more of these communities to attract and retain businesses and talent supply.
- Promote interregional connectivity.
- Provide more multimodal transportation options to connect major metropolitan areas and regions.
- Promote more rail connectivity.
- Promote intermodal connectivity and intermodal hubs.

- Collaborate with the Universities and technical schools to promote better educated transportation and logistics workforce. This will provide new ideas.
- Develop a regional strategy to connect communities within a region.
- Provide multimodal transportation options.
- Evaluate the reasons for congestion, whether it is school, work, visitors, etc. Create strategies for alternative transportation options for these purposes.
- Create incentives or dis-incentives for using shuttle system in dense urban areas.
- Work with universities, community colleges, and technical schools to educate a transportation logistics workforce. Partner with the schools and businesses to provide internship opportunities for students.
- Develop a regional strategy for freight movement. Ensure existing and proposed land uses are considered in this strategy.
- Incentivize the use of rail, carpooling, etc. to encourage employees to take modes of transportation other than their personal automobile.
- Funding source for training facilities/opportunities. Maybe the Strategic Intermodal System?
- Partner with universities, community colleges, and technical schools to promote transportation and logistics training programs.

**Goal Area: Transportation Solutions that Support Quality Places to Live, Learn, Work, and Play**

Highest Rated Concepts:

- Need to perform a regional freight study.
- Develop a regional transportation plan.
- Implement design measures, such as shade and buffered bike lanes, to enhance the bicycling and walking experience.

Input Received on this Goal Area

- Connectivity – transportation for disadvantage need for cross county connections
- More complete streets, with bike lanes, sidewalks; more multimodal – currently they are not safe
- Promote the Seminole railway, whatever needs to be done to move the project along; right of way – for commuter rail in addition to its existing freight/other



- Better east-west connector with the rail system – more efficient than truck;
- Need rail for both people and goods
- Multi use corridors
- Transportation hubs for shipping/trucking; need intermodal logistics centers – hubs to be able to move goods and connections to hubs
- Inland counties are working on it; Lee County not so much – needed for economic development; possibilities for redevelopment
- Provide connections to hubs, via roads, rails, ports – right size the roads for all of these
- More coordinated land use and transportation
- Need a regional freight study for 6 counties of southwest Florida; partner with rural counties and desire with larger intermodal facilities; connect to east coast and rest of Florida; Chamber report has “big hole” in southwest Florida, region needs to be included to support expected growth
- Past retirement driven; ag driven; tourism driven – moving toward same goals and coordinate better
- Identify existing SIS and identify where to locate them; look for area to support intermodal center; focus on existing facilities to locate future systems (Charlotte I-76 US 17 Seminole Gulf Railroad and Charlotte County Airport)
- Trucks on local streets – Reducing the number of lanes is bad for community; can bring in goods much cheaper; how can I get to shopping, church. Be sensitive to taking things away that people need.
- Multimodal – applies for everyone; historically the commuter
- Right sizing the road network; ownership/management of roads
- Do peak season studies
- Likes road diets; many 2-lanes carrying the majority of traffic
- Context sensitive.
- Partner with health organizations to promote/educate healthier side of walking and biking
- Enhance facilities – small sidewalks are not enough

- Lee Tran limited financially; to enhance bus ridership to get people to places they want; we need partnerships such as Collier/Estero – currently developing prime routes only and need to expand to more areas.
- More collaboration among all partners, particularly for transit; e.g. Lee Tran and Palm Tran coordination for regional
- Many folks want rail but need to focus on low hanging fruit; such as transit route connections. Start with bus and when there is demand, add rail.
- Regional and east-west transit would support education attainment, employment options, disability access
- Enhancing rural transit – connections to opportunities in other rural and non-rural areas
- Rail is too far distant and focus on bus
- Engage rural Florida on issues and needs
- Use of technology is important for future of transit; attracting people to transit and giving them information about how to use it (Google Transit)
- Need a regional transportation plan for southwest plan – very much need a plan
- State's port, SIS, rail, freight/mobility plan – this region is left out of all of those plans
- We are facing these issues and want coordination between this region and other regions
- All 5 MPOs meet regionally, to jointly solve problems; like the idea of a regional plan
- Stronger preference for regional projects; Burnt Store Rd as example
- Need collaboration and early planning across agencies, especially land use/transportation decisions – regional planning councils, school districts
- Money needs to support multiple purposes
- Integration of systems and sharing of information (e.g., Charlotte County airport is regional emergency)
- Revisit concurrency; consider reinstituting concurrency
- Context sensitive planning; the problem is if you don't have it, then there are issues. Meet overall goals. Need more visioning. Establish goals. Commit political will. Community commits to the vision and make time/champions and flexibility to see through
- Use non-highway modes and new technologies for moving people and goods, and accessing services (adding underline)

- Need to move to non-auto modes for our own health
- Need bike for 60% (interested but cautious) not for strong/fearless; interest is in mode shift – want buffered bike lanes
- Complete streets is not the full answer.

## **Goal Area: Transportation Solutions that Enhance Florida's Environment and Conserve Energy**

### Highest Rated Concepts:

- Partnering on stormwater, also for recreation and resources.
- Improve the rail network, especially for fuel shipments.
- Use existing facilities and alternative routes before expanding the system.

### Input Received on this Goal Area

- With respect to rural roads; expand existing roads before building new roads; use others for wildlife crossings (SR 29)
- More electric charging stations/infrastructure
- Hardwood cultivation every 20 years in the medians/islands – harvest for natural resources (a source of income for transportation)
- Storm water runoff recovery and treatment; a regional system to store and treat the water to create a park at the same time
- Regional partnerships for using land around the facilities – parks, ag, etc.
- Noise
- Storm water facilities may have recreational value; for example use for duck hunting/fishing – generate revenue and jobs
- Electric, driverless vehicles and drones – prepare infrastructure now
- Look at big picture when planning the road; expand on existing infrastructure; maximize use of existing facilities first
- Don't cut through the center of Everglades
- Cross access easements to create parallel networks (side access roads) to reduce number of trips in and out on highway; manage the connections
- Coordination between local and transportation agencies

- Alternatives to expanding capacity to reduce congestion along roads; alternative routes, complete streets where appropriate;
- Increasing mass transit – particularly for people crossing county lines to go to work every day, for example park and ride lots; regional transit system
- Put facilities and infrastructure where appropriate – local/community plans (sidewalks on SR-80 not needed)
- Water – infrastructure shouldn't impact water; partner with environmental groups; Protect water resources; sharing information; Include major partners
- Instead of building stormwater ponds – partner for recreational uses too, regional stormwater facilities (SR-739 is an example – duck watch)
- Can we do MORE than just the project? To make it better.
- Fuel shipments – rail spur to airport would reduce trips and impacts; taking advantage of rail network for movement of goods and fuel
- Rebuild bridges, for example, build in wildlife crossings (in planning and the planning development and engineering process)
- Up front planning; good planning early for environmental; maintain planning commitments
- Economic development – land use and transportation coordination; plan for roads before the development shows up; more timely
- Coordinate with FDOT and county or local partners, MPOs
- New technology to conserve energy, e.g., streetlight conversions, solar roof, fuel changes (Ft Myers LNG) – want more integration of non- traditional fuel infrastructure for greater use
- Reduce footprint of emissions and monitor progress toward goals
- Continue to do research and deploy technology improvements among new energy sources (LED street lighting)
- Water aquifer recharge area in Lee County; reduce transportation and development impacts to it; avoid the area and commit to the intent and purpose of it
- Need to prioritize water as a human need
- Promote smart growth – growth near existing services/facilities
- Want Seminole Gulf rail corridor for commuter rail and freight

- More use of green infrastructure and design within right of way to extent possible – e.g., don't irrigate raised median, use the medians instead of the stormwater; needs to be incorporated into many little places all over
- Plant more trees; shade for sidewalks and bike lanes; sustainable landscaping usable to the users of the corridor
- Coordinate with development on design and location at streetscape level
- Tied to use of transit; bus shelters and shade.

### **Next Steps**

Dana thanked the participants for their valuable input and asked everyone to fill out an evaluation form and comment form before leaving to ensure FDOT can continue to improve the process. She noted that participants could refer to the website, [www.floridatransportationplan.com](http://www.floridatransportationplan.com), for more information about the update of the FTP and SIS Policy Plan. Dana again thanked everyone for joining and closed the workshop.