



# CUTR

CENTER for URBAN  
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RESEARCH

## **Review of MPO Regional Planning, Decision Making, and Coordinated Project Implementation**

**February 2014**

**PROJECT NO.**

FDOT BDK84, Task Work Order #932-06

**PREPARED FOR**

Florida Department of Transportation & Florida MPO Advisory Council



Center for Urban Transportation Research  
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FDOT BDK84, Task Work Order #932-06

Prepared for:



**Florida Department of Transportation**

Prepared by:



**USF Center for Urban Transportation Research**

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**Final Report**

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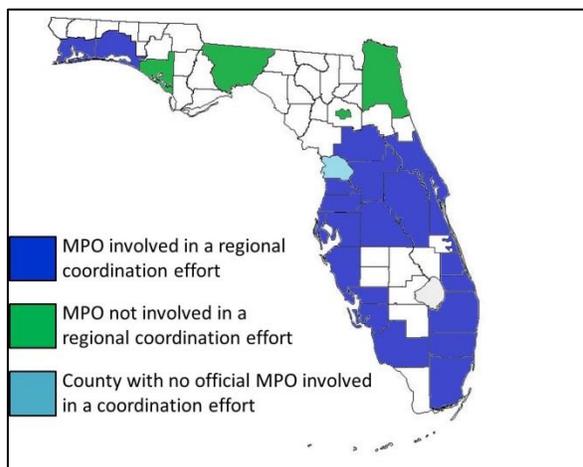
## Regional Transportation Planning Activities and Products

### Background

In 2005 and again in 2010, researchers at the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida (USF) conducted an assessment of the status of regional transportation planning in Florida and of products being produced by regional alliances of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in support of the 2025 and the 2060 Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) updates. CUTR created an inventory of both completed and planned regional transportation planning products and a summary of regional transportation priorities developed by the regional alliances of MPOs in existence at that time.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Florida MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC) have asked that CUTR researchers refresh the previous assessments of regional transportation planning activities and products. This research represents an effort to improve regional transportation planning and project implementation efforts by highlighting current planning activities and projects that have been made possible through these regional alliances. These research findings reflect the status of regional transportation planning activities and products being conducted and developed by Florida's MPOs as of December 2013.

The MPOAC is a statewide planning and policy organization that was created by the Florida Legislature to augment the role of individual MPOs in the cooperative transportation planning process. The MPOAC serves as a statewide forum that encourages MPOs to work together to address broader issues and to coordinate planning and programming activities while serving as a resource for MPO alliances.



**Figure 1 Florida's MPOs and Counties Participating in Regional Alliances**

In all, a total of 22 of Florida's 26 MPOs have entered into formal arrangements to coordinate regional transportation planning activities with one or more neighboring MPOs. Figure 1 contains a map depicting the MPOs participating in regional alliances, the Citrus County TPO (which is not an officially designated MPO that participates in a formal alliance), and the MPOs that are not a part of a formal alliance. Four of those efforts involve three or more MPOs working through a regional association of MPOs, while the rest include two contiguous MPOs working together to coordinate regional transportation planning and decision-making. Six MPOs participate in more than one alliance (Polk TPO, Martin MPO, St. Lucie TPO, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, Lee County MPO, and Sarasota/Manatee MPO).

The regional coordinating efforts of MPOs are listed in Table 1, including the number of member MPOs, acronym, and formation date for each (as applicable):

<b>Table 1: MPO Regional Coordinating Efforts</b>			
<i>Name of MPO Alliance</i>	<i>Number of Member MPOs</i>	<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Year Formed</i>
<b>Regional Alliances of MPOs (three or more MPOs working together)</b>			
Central Florida MPO Alliance	6*	CFMPOA	1997
Southeast Florida Transportation Council	3	SEFTC	2005
Treasure Coast Transportation Council	3	TCTC	2006
West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee	6*	CCC	1992
<b>Contiguous MPOs (two MPOs working together)</b>			
Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO			2010
Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO			2004
Collier County MPO and Lee County MPO			2004
Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO			2006
Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Planning Organization		NWFLRTPO	2004

\*Polk TPO is a member of both the CFMPOA and the CCC

Given the widespread existence of regional MPO alliances, many regional transportation planning products have been generated including but not limited to:

- regional long range transportation plans
- regional goals and objectives
- regional project priority lists
- regional congestion management systems
- regional freight plans
- regional public involvement programs

As a result of regional MPO coordination, a variety of regionally significant transportation projects have been planned, programmed, and constructed all across the state. A sampling of significant regional products and projects is listed in Table 2.

Projects and plans range from multi-county regional public transit projects like SunRail (commuter rail) in Central Florida to regionally significant traffic demand management projects like the I-95 Express Lanes in Southeast Florida. Large-scale projects such as the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC) and the I-75 Airport Direct Connect illustrate a recent focus on improving regional connections between modes. Increased emphasis has also been placed on regional recreational facilities such as the Coast to Coast Connector/Close the Gaps Initiative, a multi-use trail that crosses the state from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. Regional MPO coordination efforts have also resulted in regional long range transportation plans and numerous joint regional priorities lists that are developed and supported by multiple MPOs.

<b>Table 2: Regionally Significant Products and Projects Developed Through Regional MPO Coordination</b>	
<i>Plans</i>	<i>Alliance</i>
High Priority Transit Projects List for West Central Florida	CCC
St. Lucie/Martin Joint 2035 RL RTP	St. Lucie TPO and Martin MPO
Various Joint Regional Priorities Lists between Contiguous MPOs	Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO; Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO; Collier County MPO and Lee County MPO
<i>Projects</i>	<i>Alliance</i>
I-75 Airport Direct Connect in Southwest Florida	Collier County MPO and Lee County MPO
I-95/I-595 and I-75 Express Lanes Projects	SEFTC
Indian Street Bridge Construction/Widening Project in Florida's Treasure Coast	TCTC
Miami Intermodal Center (MIC)	SEFTC
SunRail	CFMPOA
<i>Other</i>	<i>Alliance</i>
Coast to Coast Connector/Close the Gaps Initiative	CFMPOA and CCC
Myregion.org	CFMPOA

Each of the regional alliances discussed in this technical memorandum have been formed as a result of one of two situations – either FDOT requested that two or more MPOs consider consolidating following the merger of previously separate urbanized areas as defined by the United States Census Bureau or the MPOs entered into an interlocal agreement to qualify for Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding (described in detail in the following section). When urbanized areas covered by separate MPOs are merged to form a single, larger urbanized area, FDOT typically requests that the MPOs consider consolidating or at least considering significantly improving regional coordination. Rather than choosing to consolidate, each of the MPOs discussed in this technical memorandum chose to engage form formal MPO alliances to facilitate regional planning.

### **Transportation Regional Incentive Program**

The Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) was created as part of major Growth Management legislation enacted during the 2005 Legislative Session (SB 360). The purpose of the program is to encourage regional planning by providing state matching funds for improvements to regionally significant transportation facilities identified and prioritized by regional partners (see Table 3).

<b>Table 3: Partners Eligible for TRIP Funding</b>
Two or more contiguous MPOs
One or more MPOs and one or more contiguous counties that are not members of a MPO
A multi-county regional transportation authority created by or pursuant to law
Two or more contiguous counties that are not members of a MPO
MPOs comprised of three or more counties

These partners must form a regional transportation area, pursuant to an interlocal agreement, and develop a regional transportation plan that identifies and prioritizes regionally-significant facilities. The interlocal agreement must include the development

of the regional transportation plan, delineate the boundaries of the regional transportation area, provide the duration of the agreement and how it may be changed, describe the planning process, and define a dispute resolution process.

Several eligible regional partnerships have been formed across the state many of which include one or more MPOs working in coordination with their neighbors to achieve regional benefits. Table 4 contains a list of the fourteen TRIP partnerships that have been formed by interlocal agreement and that include one or more MPOs.

<b>Table 4: List of Partnerships Eligible for TRIP Funding</b>	
<i>Name of Alliance/Counties Working Together</i>	<i>Number of Counties</i>
Capital Region TPA	4
Central Florida MPO Alliance	9
Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO	2
Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO	2
Collier County MPO and Lee County MPO	2
Florida-Alabama TPO	3
Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO	2
MetroPlan Orlando	3
North Florida TPO	4
Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Planning Organization	5
Southeast Florida Transportation Council	3
Treasure Coast Transportation Council	3
West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee	8

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## Regional Alliances of MPOs (three or more MPOs working together)

### Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA)

#### *CFMPOA History*

The Orlando-Volusia Alliance was formed in 1997 by MetroPlan Orlando and the Volusia TPO (then called the Volusia County MPO) as a regional collaborative to focus on transportation planning issues of mutual interest, including improvements to the I-4 bridge across the St. John's River. In 2001 the Space Coast TPO, the Lake-Sumter MPO, the Ocala-Marion County TPO, and the Polk TPO joined MetroPlan Orlando and the Volusia TPO to formally establish the Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA). Figure 2 depicts the agencies participating in the CFMPOA. This raised the full membership of the Alliance to six MPOs covering all or part of 10 counties. The Alliance was originally established and governed by a joint resolution of the participating member MPOs and the FDOT, but the members of the CFMPOA strengthened the Alliance coordination documentation in 2005 by entering into an interlocal agreement.



**Figure 2 Map of CFMPOA Member MPOs**

#### *Organizational Structure*

The CFMPOA has a policy board of 18 voting members made up of three members from each member MPO. FDOT Districts 1 and 5 and the Florida Turnpike Enterprise are each considered non-voting advisors to the CFMPOA Policy Board. The Policy Board meets quarterly in the MetroPlan Orlando offices and operates under the basis of consensus. The CFMPOA does not have subcommittees.

Originally, the administrative duties of the CFMPOA were performed by each member MPO on a rotating basis; however, in 2007, MetroPlan Orlando agreed to provide ongoing staff support for the CFMPOA. Each member MPO provides an annual contribution to MetroPlan Orlando to cover administrative expenses including, but not limited to, support staff, off-site meeting expenses, meeting advertising costs, copying and printing costs, technology costs, postage and/or delivery service, and other publications/reports as approved by the Alliance.

Individual member MPOs use consultants to complete a variety of planning activities, but the CFMPOA has never, as an organization, paid for the services of a consultant. However, member MPOs do undertake work for the group using their individual consultants and incur the associated costs on behalf of the CFMPOA. While there is no

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dedicated CFMPOA website, MetroPlan Orlando hosts CFMPOA documents and other relevant information on a dedicated page on its website - <http://www.metroplanorlando.com/partnerships/central-florida-mpo-alliance>.

### ***Projects in Progress and Completed***

The CFMPOA used a bottom-up approach to develop the Central Florida Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The plan is a composite of the individual CFMPOA member MPO LRTPs and provides a synthesis of elements from each LRTP determined to be regionally significant. This determination was facilitated by a process described in a Regional Prioritization Priorities and Process document which is detailed later in this section. The Central Florida LRTP includes a description of the need for regional transportation planning, provides a summary of each member MPO LRTP, broad regional goals, a list of regionally significant priority projects and the cost to implement those projects.

CFMPOA member MPOs are in the process of completing individual metropolitan level 2040 LRTPs. Subsequently, these individual MPO plans will be used to develop a 2040 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan. Multi-jurisdictional projects will be thoroughly coordinated among applicable MPOs as individual LRTPs are developed.

The CFMPOA established the Central Florida Smart Growth Alliance to work with the Central Florida Partnership and myregion.org (both are coalitions of businesses, government, and civic organizations focused on improving the Central Florida area) to address issues related to growth on a regional basis. The following research and publications resulted from the collaborative partnership with myregion.org and can be found on the myregion.org website:

- **PennDesign Central Florida: Our Region in the Year 2050:** a study conducted by a team from the University of Pennsylvania focusing on the economic, environmental and demographic impacts that are projected to occur in the region by 2050
- **"How Shall We Grow?":** a 15-month visioning process initiated in 2006 which will serve as a framework for regional land use and transportation plans
- **"Connecting for Global Competitiveness - Florida's Super Region":** Using computer-aided analysis based on population and job projections, this study presents two alternatives for the Central Florida Super Region in 2050, one that follows growth patterns already established in Florida and one that considers the potential for compact urban centers and infill development along transit corridors given the impending presence of high speed rail and local transit opportunities
- **Central Florida Scorecard:** a tool meant to assist leaders in tracking the progress of Central Florida in community development and global competitiveness. The Central Florida Scorecard uses information like talent supply and education, innovation and economic development, infrastructure and growth leadership, business climate and competitiveness, civic and governance systems, and quality of life and quality places to determine the progress of the region.

Upon completion of this work, the Smart Growth Alliance was dissolved. These examples and other documents and activities of regional significance are listed in Table 5.

<b>Table 5: CFMPOA Documents Produced, Documents in Progress, and Ongoing Activities</b>	
<i>Document/Activity</i>	<i>Progress</i>
2025 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan	Completed
Legislative Priorities List	Ongoing
Myregion.org	Ongoing
Regional Prioritization Priorities and Process Document	Completed
Regional Prioritization Initiative	Ongoing
Regional Tracking the Trends Document	Ongoing

The CFMPOA has supported a number of regionally significant projects over the years. One of the most important was the first commuter rail system developed for Central Florida, SunRail. The project is being constructed in two phases. The first will connect the Sand Lake Road station in Orange County to the DeBary station in Volusia County. The second will extend the system from the DeBary station east to the DeLand station and from the Sand Lake Road station to the Poinciana station in Osceola County. SunRail stations are currently under construction across Central Florida and when the project is finished, it is expected to carry the equivalent of one lane of Interstate 4 traffic during peak travel times.

The LYNX LYMMO service is Orlando’s bus rapid transit (BRT) system that was developed in 1997 to provide easy and efficient access to downtown businesses, shopping, government services and the downtown entertainment district. The LYMMO service is funded through the City of Orlando’s Downtown Development Board and Parking Division and is free to all users. LYMMO service runs on dedicated transit lanes and is equipped with intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technology that provides traffic signal priority to LYMMO vehicles along its three mile route. LYMMO is currently expanding its service and will replace the existing route with two new routes in early 2014. This expansion includes renovated shelters and kiosks providing real time information to transit riders. The CFMPOA was a strong advocate in support of the expansion of LYMMO services and has made it a regional priority. These projects and other projects of regional significance are listed in Table 6.

<b>Table 6: Transportation Projects and Project Phases Supported/Advocated/Planned by CFMPOA</b>	
<i>Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Expansion of LYMMO	Under Construction
I-4 Ultimate Master Plan	Under Construction
SunRail	Under Construction
Wekiva Parkway Project	Under Construction

### **Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014**

The CFMPOA developed a Regional Prioritization Priorities and Process document that outlines the projects that have been prioritized for 2013-2014. The CFMPOA prioritization follows the order within each MPO’s priority list while combining the 6 lists into one regional list. Project cost, scale of magnitude, and cost-benefit factor is

considered along with the urbanized population and visitor population served by the project. The priorities listed in Table 7 were developed using the Regional Prioritization Priorities and Process document.

<b>Table 7: CFMPOA 2013-2014 Prioritized Projects</b>	
<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
Add Managed Lanes to I-4	51.75 Miles
Ellis Road Interchange improvements and widening	2 Miles
Interchange Improvements at I-75/Florida's Turnpike	
Operations and Capacity Improvements to I-75/SR 40 Interchange	1.25 Miles
Widen SR 15/US 17 to 4 lanes	20 Miles
Widen SR 25/US 27 to 6 lanes	2.14 Miles
Widen SR 40 to 6 Lanes	20 Miles
Widen SR 528 to 6 lanes	2.5 Miles
Upgrade I-95/I-4 Interchange	

## **Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC)**

### *SEFTC History*

The three MPOs in Southeast Florida (the Broward MPO, the Miami-Dade Urbanized Area MPO, and the Palm Beach MPO) have been coordinating informally on regional transportation planning issues for many years. Initial activities focused on air quality coordination, implementation of coordinated Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and establishment of the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA)<sup>1</sup>. These three MPOs also collaborated on joint studies and projects such as the Transit

Bridge (a Bus Rapid Transit connection between the Broward and Miami-Dade transit systems) and Tri-Rail services.

The West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, and Miami-Dade urbanized areas were merged following the 2000 U.S. Census to form a single, significantly larger urbanized area covering all three MPOs in Southeastern Florida. In February 2003, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation sent a letter to all three MPOs asking them to form a single MPO covering the entire urbanized area. Alternatively, the letter suggested the MPOs develop a formal



**Figure 3 Map of SEFTC Member MPOs**

regional coordination mechanism if they felt that the size and complexity of the shared urbanized area warranted multiple MPOs. The three MPOs decided to remain separate

<sup>1</sup> On July 1, 2003, legislation passed by the Florida Legislature and signed by Governor Bush, transformed the Tri-County Commuter Rail Authority (Tri-Rail) into the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA).

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and formed the Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC) by interlocal agreement in 2006 (shown in Figure 3). The SEFTC Interlocal Agreement states that SEFTC will be responsible for producing a regional long range transportation plan, a process for prioritizing regional projects, a regional public involvement process, and performance measures to assess the effectiveness of regional coordination activities.

Following the 2010 Census, FDOT sent another letter requesting that the three MPOs consider consolidating. SEFTC responded April 22, 2013 stating that the MPOs of Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties jointly concurred that the three MPOs should be individually redesignated. The response also states that the decision to remain separate entities will not adversely impact ongoing and future coordination between the MPOs. The fact that SEFTC responded to the letter from FDOT in lieu of each individual MPO responding separately may be viewed as an indicator of how well established SEFTC has become as a functioning mechanism for regional coordination.

### ***Organizational Structure***

The SEFTC Governing Board meets quarterly and comprises the chair or designee of each of the three member MPOs. SEFTC meetings rotate between the offices of the member MPOs, the Regional Planning Councils, and the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority. SEFTC is supported by a committee structure that includes the Regional Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (RTTAC), the RTTAC Modeling Subcommittee, Regional Freight Subcommittee, and the Regional Public Involvement Management Team. The RTTAC meets monthly and comprises staff from the three member MPOs, FDOT Districts 4 and 6, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, the SFRTA, the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils (RPCs), Palm Tran, Miami-Dade Transit, the Broward Office of Transportation and the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority. The RTTAC Modeling Subcommittee, Regional Freight Subcommittee, and the Regional Public Involvement Management Team meets as needed.

SEFTC uses consulting services to complete a variety of planning tasks with each MPO paying an equal share of the total general consulting contract. A consulting firm was employed to develop the 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP) and a consultant will be used to develop the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). A general planning consultant is also responsible for organizing and managing SEFTC meetings, keeping meeting minutes, managing the [seftc.org](http://seftc.org) website, and coordinating between the three member MPOs. SEFTC hosts a website ([seftc.org](http://seftc.org)) where various information about the agency can be found including contact information, meeting schedules and minutes, committees, and documents produced by SEFTC.

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### *Projects in Progress and Completed*

Before constructing the 2035 RL RTP SEFTC reviewed a set of 30 documents approved by the RTTAC pertaining to the regional transportation system and existing and forecast travel activities in the three-county area. Upon completion of the review, it was determined that the following nine focus areas contained information that was considered useful to the development of the 2035 LRTP:

- Legal Mandates
- Statewide Transportation Plans
- Airport Master Plans/System Plans
- Seaport Plans and Studies
- Transit Plans and Studies
- Freight and Goods Movement Studies
- Long Range Transportation Plans
- Freeway Master Plans
- Other

With guidance and key information found in the 30 documents that were reviewed, SEFTC could begin developing the 2035 RL RTP using the regional transportation model, the Southeast Florida Regional Planning Model (SERPM). The 2035 RL RTP was based on a regional transportation network identified using criteria for roads, transit services, and intermodal hubs and included individual MPO projects on the regional network. SEFTC is revising the regional transportation model network to include transit system data for the 2040 RL RTP.

In May 2008, SEFTC developed a Regional Public Involvement Plan (RPIP) to serve as a guide for the selection and application of public involvement tools and strategies in regional studies. Because transportation projects can have serious impacts on the economic and social structure of an area, the RPIP established the following public involvement strategies to ensure the equal treatment of individual neighborhoods:

- Regional Public Involvement Management Team: Consists of Public Outreach Coordinators from each member MPO concerned with keeping each other informed on projects that have a regional impact;
- Regional Citizens Advisory Committee (RCAC): Consists of members from each member MPO CAC. RCAC meets annually to discuss and receive updates on current and future projects of regional significance;
- SEFTC website (seftc.org): Contains important regional planning information for the community;
- Integrated Transportation Information System: a tool that enables public involvement officers to review the social, economic, and geographic characteristics of an area before public involvement outreach is initiated in order to develop a more effective outreach strategy.

The 2035 LRTP, the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, the RPIP and other documents of regional significance are listed in Table 8.

<b>Table 8: SEFTC Documents Produced, Documents in Progress, and Ongoing Activities</b>	
<i>Document/Activity</i>	<i>Progress</i>
2035 LRTP	Completed
2040 Regional Transportation Plan	In Progress
Annual Prioritized List of Regional Transportation Projects	Ongoing
Cargo 2040	In Progress
Regional Greenway Plan	In Progress
Regional Performance Standards	In Progress
Regional Public Involvement Plan	Completed
Regional Transit System Plan	In Progress
Southeast Florida Passenger Rail Evaluation	Completed
South Florida Regional Freight Plan	Completed
South Florida East Coast Corridor Study	In Progress

The Miami Intermodal Center (MIC) is a major project that has been planned for Miami-Dade County since 1993. The MIC is a transportation hub under construction just east of the Miami International Airport (MIA) to provide connectivity between various transportation modes available in the county. The first two phases of the MIC, the Rental Car Center and the MIA Mover (a monorail shuttling passengers between the MIC and MIA), were completed in 2010 and 2011. The groundbreaking of the third phase of the MIC, Miami Central Station, took place in September of 2011. Miami Central Station will be the County's first all-inclusive ground transportation hub including an intercity bus terminal, intercity rail terminal, regional commuter rail platform, metro-rail station, and metro-bus station. Miami Central Station will also provide access for bicycle and pedestrian users and a connection to MIA through the Miami Mover. This project is anticipated to be completed in 2014. The MIC and other projects of regional significance are listed in Table 9.

<b>Table 9: Transportation Projects and Project Phases Supported/Advocated/Planned by SEFTC</b>	
<i>Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Flamingo Road /Red Road /SR 823 Widening Project (In Progress)	Under Construction
I-75 Express Lanes	Under Construction
I-95/I-595 Express Lanes	Under Construction
Miami Intermodal Center	Under Construction
Palm Avenue Widening Project	Under Construction
Port of Miami Tunnel	Under Construction
Repaving and Minor Widening of Krome Avenue	Under Construction
S.R. 826/Palmetto Express Lanes	Under Construction

### **Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014**

SEFTC produced a technical memorandum in 2007 that outlines a three step process used for prioritizing projects for the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP). The Interim South Florida Regional Prioritization Process was developed with the intention of promoting consistency in the goals and objectives established by each of the

MPO's in the region. This Prioritization Process includes a benefit-cost evaluation for each project using the following three steps to rank each project accordingly:

1. Tier 1 Criterion - the user benefit-cost ratio (benefit is derived from the regional transportation model and cost is provided by the lead agency). After the benefit-cost ratio is determined, that ratio is converted to a raw number value so that it can be weighted and measured against the value of other projects under consideration.
2. Tier 2 Criteria Assessment - allows for a fair comparison for all projects regardless of whether they can be modeled and a benefit-cost ratio can be calculated. Defined by four categories: 1) project readiness, 2) safety benefit, 3) multimodal benefit, and 4) regional connectivity benefit. Each project is evaluated by the RTTAC and rated according to each category on a one to five scale.
3. Project Ranking – each project is ranked by its total weighted score (Tier 1 plus Tier 2). The projects under consideration are listed in descending order according to total weighted score and the projects with the highest score are recommended as regional priority projects.

Through the Interim Southeast Florida Regional Prioritization Process, SEFTC prioritized 12 projects for TRIP funding listed in Table 10.

<b>Table 10: SEFTC 2013-2014 Prioritized Projects</b>	
<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
Construction of the Miami Intermodal Center (Central Station)	
Multimodal facility and access improvements to I-95/South Florida Rail Corridor	
Widening of SR 823	1 Mile
Add two lanes to SR 7	2 Miles
Integrate vanpool service on regional roads	
Upgrade traffic signals on regional corridors	
Increase mass transit options by adding six express busses	
Intersection improvements at Indiantown Rd. and Maplewood	
Intersection improvements at Indiantown R. and Central Boulevard	
Intersection improvements at Atlantic Ave. and Jog Rd.	
Integrate Transit Signal Priority (TSP) along regional corridors	
Intersection Improvements at Sheridan St. and Dixie Hwy.	

## **Treasure Coast Transportation Council (TCTC)**

### *TCTC History*

The Ft. Pierce Urbanized Area (UZA) was designated following the 1980 census and the St. Lucie County MPO (now the St. Lucie TPO) was formed to conduct metropolitan transportation planning in that new metropolitan area. Following the 1990 census, the Martin County MPO (now the Martin MPO) and the Indian River County MPO were formed to conduct metropolitan transportation planning for the newly designated Stuart and

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Vero Beach UZAs. These three Treasure Coast MPOs coordinated informally on regional transportation planning issues during the 1990's and early 2000's, but no formal coordination mechanism was in place.



**Figure 4 Map of TCTC Member MPOs**

Between 1990 and 2000, the Ft. Pierce and Stuart UZAs grew and crossed county lines and with the 2000 census, the two UZAs were merged to form the single Port St. Lucie UZA. In February 2003, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation sent a letter to the St. Lucie and Martin MPOs asking them to consider forming a single MPO covering the entire urbanized area. Alternatively, the letter suggested that the MPOs to develop a formal regional coordination mechanism if they felt that the size and complexity of the shared urbanized area warranted multiple MPOs.

On April 10th, 2006 the Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River County MPOs entered into an interlocal agreement to create the Treasure Coast Transportation Council (TCTC). The TCTC was created foremost to secure TRIP funding but it has since come to serve as a forum for formal coordination and communication among agencies and organizations involved in regional transportation planning. Figure 4 provides map denoting the TCTC member MPOs.

### ***Organizational Structure***

The Council consists of the chair and vice-chair from each MPO Board for a total of six voting members plus three ex-officio, non-voting advisors, one from FDOT District 4, one from the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, and one from the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council. The administrative duties of the TCTC are performed by each of the three member MPOs on a rotating basis. The TCTC meets annually to coordinate regional planning issues, projects, and funding. The TCTC used a consultant on one occasion – to develop the Regionally Ranked 2030 Needs Projects document in 2007. There is no formal TCTC website but information about the TCTC can be found at each member MPOs website.

### ***Projects in Progress and Completed***

The TCTC developed a document in 2007 detailing the regional project prioritization criteria that was used to develop the Regionally Ranked 2030 Needs Projects document. The Regional Prioritization Criteria assigns a point value to a proposed project according to 24 different categories and ranks them in order of priority according to point values.

Congestion, for example, is one of the criteria that are taken into account. A project that reduces the volume/congestion ratio (v/c ratio) by .75 or less earns one point. A project reducing the v/c ratio by between .75 and 1.05 earns two points and a project reducing the v/c ratio by more than 1.05 earns three points. These documents are listed in Table 11.

<b>Table 11: TCTC Documents Produced, Documents in Progress, and Ongoing Activities</b>	
<i>Document/Activity</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Regional Project Prioritization Criteria Document	Completed
Regionally Ranked 2030 Needs Projects	Completed

The Indian Street Bridge construction and road widening project is a high priority on the Regionally Ranked 2030 Needs Projects list. This project involves construction of a new bridge over the South Fork of the St. Lucie River in Martin County to connect Palm City with the City of Stuart and widening of Indian Street to 4 lanes. Designated bicycle lanes and eight foot sidewalks will be included for the length of the project. When completed, it will serve as an alternate to SR 17 and the Palm Street Bridge. This project and other projects of regional significance are listed in Table 12.

<b>Table 12: Transportation Projects and Project Phases Supported/Advocated/Planned by TCTC:</b>	
<i>Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Add 2 lanes to CR 512	Under Construction
Indian Street Bridge Project/Widening	Under Construction
Widen 66 <sup>th</sup> Ave. to 4 lanes	Under Construction
Widen CR 510 to 4 lanes	Under Construction
Widen I-95 to 6 lanes	Under Construction
Widen Indian River Blvd. to 6 lanes	Under Construction
Widen Jenkins Rd. to 4 lanes	Under Construction
Widen Midway Rd. to 6 lanes	Under Construction
Widen SR 60 to 6 lanes	Under Construction
Widen US 1 to 6 lanes	Under Construction

### **Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014**

The Directors of the member MPOs met informally with FDOT in September 2013 to discuss regional transportation planning issues and how the TCTC could best address those issues, but chose not to develop a formal regional prioritized project list for fiscal year 2013-2014. Although there is currently no officially adopted prioritized project list, passenger rail has long been a priority of the TCTC (as noted in the Regionally Ranked 2030 Needs Projects document). The focus of the next annual meeting of the TCTC will be to begin the process of developing a regional project priority list that will inevitably include the construction of passenger rail infrastructure and focus heavily on passenger rail in general.

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## West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC)



**Figure 5 Map of CCC Member MPOs and Counties**

### *CCC History*

In early 1989, the Hillsborough County MPO and Pinellas County MPO staff directors began meeting to coordinate regional transportation planning and were joined by the Pasco County MPO later that same year. The West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) was officially formed in 1992 following the 1990 census and the Governor's re-designation of the MPOs. This was the first formal regional MPO alliance in Florida and the only one to be required in Florida Statute. In 1993, the Spring Hill/Hernando MPO (now Hernando County MPO) joined the CCC and the

name was changed to the Tampa Bay Area's Chairman's Coordinating Committee. In 2000, the Polk TPO and the Sarasota/Manatee MPO joined the Tampa Bay Area's Chairman's Coordinating Committee by amendment to Florida Statute (s. 339.175, F. S.) and the name was again changed to the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee. In 2004, an interlocal agreement was signed by members of the CCC and amended in 2006 to add the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners as a voting member for the purpose of participating in the Transportation Regional Incentive Program. In July 2010 the Interlocal Agreement was amended to remove the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners and to add the Citrus County Transportation Planning Organization (created pursuant to Chapter 163.01 F.S through an interlocal agreement between Citrus County, the City of Inverness, and the City of Crystal River). Although not an official MPO, the purpose of the Citrus County TPO is to coordinate regional transportation planning efforts. Figure 5 contains a map of the CCC member MPOs and the Citrus County TPO.

### *Organizational Structure*

The voting membership of the CCC Governing Board is comprised of the chairs from six individual MPOs including the Hernando County MPO, the Hillsborough County MPO, the Pasco County MPO, the Pinellas County MPO, the Polk TPO, and the Sarasota/Manatee MPO. The Citrus County TPO is also a voting member even though it is not an officially designated MPO. As a result of the 2010 Census, the newly designated Homosassa Springs-Beverly Hills-Citrus Springs Urbanized Area within Citrus County is expected to join the Hernando County MPO.

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Additional non-voting partner entities of the CCC Board include the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 1 and 7 Secretaries, a representative from Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, representatives from four Regional Planning Councils (the Central Florida, Southwest Florida, Withlacoochee, and Tampa Bay RPCs), and a representative from the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA). Major modal providers participate on an ad hoc basis.

The CCC Board meets quarterly to discuss regional transportation issues, to develop solutions to those issues, and to ensure a consistent regional planning approach in the West Central Florida region. All administrative duties for the CCC are performed by TBARTA through a contract with the CCC, but the Chair of the CCC rotates annually among each of the voting members. The CCC Staff Directors Coordination Team, comprised of member MPO Directors, FDOT and RPC managers, and staff from other partner agencies, meets bi-weekly to carry-out the regional work program and coordinating process. The CCC uses consultants on a project specific basis. The contractors are paid through a balanced cost sharing policy between the voting members that is roughly based on population. The CCC hosts a website (<http://www.regionaltransportation.org/>) where relevant documents and other information, including meeting schedules and minutes, are posted.

The CCC developed the Joint Citizens Advisory Committee (JCAC) to provide public input and a citizen perspective. JCAC members come from the Citizens Advisory Committees of each of the member MPOs.

In the spring of 2013, the three MPOs covering the Tampa-St. Petersburg Urbanized Area (the Hillsborough County MPO, the Pinellas County MPO, and the Pasco County MPO) began to discuss ways to improve Transportation Management Area (TMA) level planning and programming coordination within the context of the broader CCC process. To date, no formal approach has been agreed upon, but the three MPO boards have agreed to establish a working group (to be called the Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area or TBTMA) comprised of three members from each MPO Board. The MPO boards also agreed that TBARTA and FDOT staff should be included in the working group. Further, there is a general consensus among the MPOs that to coordinate transportation planning activities in the larger region, the CCC process should be integrated with TBARTA planning process.

## Projects in Progress and Completed

The 2035 RL RTP, adopted in draft form in November 2009, is the CCC's primary means for coordination in the west central Florida region. The RL RTP was developed using a top down approach in which member MPOs agreed upon the following:

- a regional multi-modal transportation network
- needs on the regional transportation network
- viable regional transportation improvement strategies
- regional goals, objectives and measures of effectiveness
- available revenue sources that could be applied to the regional transportation network
- a fiscally constrained list of regional transportation projects

In essence, the 2035 RL RTP was developed using a long range transportation planning process that would be used by any individual MPO, including public involvement activities and an advisory committee process. Each of the individual member MPO LRTPs contain elements of the RL RTP appropriate for their individual MPO needs, effectively implementing the policies and project priorities of the RL RTP. The CCC has delayed the development of the 2040 LRTP so that it can be coordinated with the next TBARTA Master Plan update schedule for completion in 2015. This document and other documents of regional significance are listed in Table 13.

<i>Document/Activity</i>	<i>Progress</i>
2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan	Completed
CMP List	Completed
FDOT District 1 and District 7 TRIP Priorities List	Completed
High Priority Regional Transportation Initiatives List	Completed
Regional Multi-Use Trails Element	Completed
Regional Public Participation Plan	Completed

The Suncoast Parkway Trail is a paved recreational trail that extends from Hillsborough County, through Pasco County, and into Hernando County. The 42 mile trail integrates recreational traffic between the three counties. A portion of the trail runs adjacent to the Jay B. Starkey Wilderness Park where it crosses rivers and creeks allowing users to experience the natural environment. This project and other projects of regional significance are listed in Table 14.

<i>Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
North River Road intersection improvements	Under Construction
S.R. 52 and Prospect Road Intersection Improvements	Completed
U.S. 19 channelization, turn lanes, and access improvements	Under Construction
Widen Bruce B. Downs to 6 Lanes from Pebble Creek Rd. to County Line Rd.	Under Construction
Suncoast Parkway Trail	Completed
Courtney Campbell Causeway Recreational Trail	Under Construction

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### **Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014**

The CCC developed a TRIP Scoring Criteria Document for prioritizing projects in 2013-2014. Each proposed project is scored using eight different criteria then ranked in comparison to the scores of all other projects.

Table 15 contains a list composed of the High Priority Regional Transportation Initiatives for the West Central Florida region. These projects are not necessarily proposed TRIP projects, but are considered by the CCC to be the most important regional transportation projects.

<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
Widening of I-75 and addition of express lanes	96 Miles
Addition of express lanes with express bus stations to I-4/I-275	82 Miles
Replacement of the Howard Frankland Bridge	
New interchanges and controlled access on U.S. 19/118 <sup>th</sup> Ave. Expressway (Future S.R. 690)	
S.R. 54/56 managed lanes with transit accommodations	25 Miles
Transit and pedestrian improvements to U.S. 41	
New toll lanes and express bus service to the Suncoast Parkway Corridor	
Pinellas Alternatives Analysis	
Construction of Hybrid Rail service on existing CSX Corridors	
I-4/U.S. 92 SunRail Extension	

Table 16 contains projects listed as the FDOT District 1 and District 7 TRIP Priorities that were developed using the TRIP Scoring Criteria Document described above.

<b>Table 16: CCC 2013-2014 TRIP Prioritized Projects:</b>	
<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
U.S. 301 and Ellenton-Gillette intersection improvements	
Bartow Northern Connector Phase 2 from U.S. 17 to S.R. 60	2 Miles
Honore Road and Ashton Road intersection improvements	
Construct new 2 lane Lakeland Park Connector road	
Cattlemen Road and Palmer Road intersection improvements	
Venice Avenue and Pinebrook intersection improvements	
Expand regional vanpool program	
Expand Wesley Chapel Blvd/C.R. 54 to 4 lanes	3 Miles
Add ITS communication systems on Bryan Dairy Road	
ITS improvements on Alt. U.S. 19	
Reconstruction of 118 <sup>th</sup> Ave. to create an expressway	
Expand S.R. 54 to 6 lanes	4.7 Miles
Signal and intersection improvements on S.R. 694/Park Blvd.	
Expand Gandy Blvd. to 4 lanes and overpass/frontage road improvements	0.5 Miles
Signal and intersection improvements on S.R. 693/66 <sup>th</sup> St.	
ATMS upgrade for the City of Tampa	
Design and construction of U.S. 19 Corridor Transfer Facility	
Widen Bruce B. Downs Blvd. to 8 lanes	3.4 Miles
Widen C.R.486/Norvell Bryant Hwy. to 4 lanes	1.5 Miles
Improve ITS functions on Alt. U.S. 19	
Widen Ridge Rd. to 4 lanes	3 Miles
Improve ITS functions on Belcher Road	
Improve ITS functions on Gulf Blvd.	
Develop regional farebox program	
Widen C.R. 491/Lecanto Hwy. to 4 lanes	3 Miles

## Central Florida MPO Alliance and Chairs Coordinating Committee Agency Coordination



**Figure 6 Map of CFMPOA and CCC Coordinating Members**

### *CFMPOA and CCC Agency Coordination History and Operating Procedures*

The CFMPOA and the CCC meet annually to discuss projects and issues that affect both regions as a whole or portions thereof. The coordination between the CCC and the CFMPOA brings together 15 of Florida's 67 counties and 11 of Florida's 26 MPO's. Figure 6 provides a map of each agency participating in the coordination between the CFMPOA and the CCC.

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### **CFMPOA and CCC Agency Coordination Projects**

The Coast to Coast Trail is a project that spans across the jurisdictions of both the CCC and the CFMPOA. The Coast to Coast Trail project will connect already existing multi-use trails across the state to create a continuous multi-use trail that begins in Pinellas County at the Gulf of Mexico and ends in Brevard County at the Atlantic Ocean. Existing multi-use trails already provide over 200 miles of the proposed 275 mile continuous multi-use trail leaving only about 25% of the project that is not yet constructed or funded.

The Close the Gaps initiative is also a regional recreational trail project that completes the Heart of Florida Loop that is connected to the Coast to Coast trail. This project involves connecting several central Florida trails like the Withlacoochee State Trail, the Cross Florida Greenway, and the Mount Dora Bikeway. Table 17 includes both of these examples of projects that are supported by the CFMPOA and CCC Agency Coordination.

<b>Table 17: Transportation Projects and Project Phases Supported/Advocated/Planned by CFMPOA and CCC</b>	
<i>Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Coast-to-Coast Regional Trail	Under Construction
Closing the Gaps	Under Construction

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## Contiguous MPOs (two MPOs working together)

### Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO

#### *History*

The boundaries of the Cape Coral Urbanized area and the North Port-Port Charlotte Urbanized area have been growing closer to each other for many years, though they remain several miles apart from each other. In fact, it has become increasingly common for residents of southern Charlotte County (those living south of Charlotte Harbor) to travel to Lee County for work, shopping, and recreation. Recognizing this increase in cross-county line travel, the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda and the Lee County MPOs (Figure 7) adopted an interlocal agreement in 2010 to establish a forum for discussing regional transportation issues and coordinating regional transportation planning and policy decisions. The decision followed a joint meeting of the two MPO Governing Boards held in March of that same year.



**Figure 7 Map of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO Alliance**

#### *Organizational Structure*

The MPO Governing Boards meet at least once a year. The respective MPO Technical and Citizen Advisory Committees do not hold joint annual meetings, but representatives from the CAC of each MPO attend their counterparts meetings when common regional issues are to be discussed. The two MPO's have agreed to coordinate planning and project development activities on roadways crossing the boundary between the two counties. Coordination efforts will also apply to other transportation facilities and services

including regional bicycle projects, pedestrian and greenway projects, transit service connections, rail corridor service, and joint discretionary funding priorities. The administrative duties associated with each meeting are performed by the staff of each member MPO on a rotating basis.

Traditionally, the partnership between the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and the Lee County MPO has not required the use of consultants. However, if a project did require their use, it is anticipated that a joint funding interlocal agreement would be developed for that purpose.

Additionally, the Coordinated Urban Transportation Studies group (CUTS – an informal group comprised of Florida Department of Transportation District One planning staff, Federal Highway Florida Division planning staff and all District One MPO staff) meets

quarterly to discuss issues related to MPO business, operations, and current federal and state transportation planning issues in southwest Florida. While the CUTS group facilitates cooperation between the Southwest Florida MPOs at a staff level, it does not represent a formal MPO Alliance as it has no formal organizing structure (no interlocal agreement, no bylaws, etc.) and no involvement by MPO Governing board members.

### **Projects in Progress and Completed**

The Joint Lee/Charlotte TRIP Priorities document outlines prioritized projects through 2016/2017 consistent with the interlocal agreement which calls for the establishment of a joint regional multimodal transportation system. For example, the Joint Lee/Charlotte TRIP Priorities emphasize the importance of making improvements to Burnt Store Road because of its critical role as an emergency evacuation route. This document and other documents and activities of regional significance are listed in Table 18.

<b>Table 18: Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO Documents, Activities, and Construction Projects</b>	
<i>Document/Activity/Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Babcock Ranch Interstate Connector	Under Construction
Joint Annual Identification of Regional Project Priorities	Ongoing
Joint Lee/Charlotte TRIP Priorities 2016/2017	Completed
Joint Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Component	Completed
Seminole Gulf Rail Corridor Study	In Progress

### **Projects Prioritized for 2016-2017**

None of the projects that were prioritized in 2012 were selected by the FDOT for TRIP funding. So the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and the Lee County MPO decided to resubmit the same list (Table 19) of regional priorities for consideration for TRIP funding again in 2013 rather than develop a new list of FY 2016/17 TRIP priorities.

<b>Table 19: Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO 2016-2017 Prioritized Projects</b>	
<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
Widen Burnt Store Road to 4 lanes in Lee County	4 Miles
Widen Burnt Store Road to 4 lanes in Charlotte County	2.6 Miles
Widen Chiquita Blvd. to 6 lanes	4.1 Miles
Construct Piper Rd. North (New 4 lane road)	2.2 Miles
Intersection improvements at US 41 and Carmalita St.	
Construct new bus facilities (Including pullouts and pavement markings)	

## **Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO**

### **History**

The boundaries of the Sarasota-Bradenton Urbanized Area and the North Port-Port Charlotte Urbanized Area have been growing together steadily over the past several years. The three counties (Charlotte, Manatee, and Sarasota) have become increasingly linked through a variety of factors including increased multi-directional travel. It is no longer uncommon for a resident of one of these three counties to work or shop in one of



**Figure 8 Map of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO Alliance**

the other counties. In fact, the two urbanized areas have grown close enough geographically that they have grown into the metropolitan study areas of the respective contiguous Sarasota/Manatee and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPOs.

In February 2003, recognizing the increasingly close relationship among the three counties, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation sent a letter the two MPOs asking them to consider consolidating the two separate MPOs into a single MPO covering the three-county area.

Alternatively, the letter asked the MPOs to develop a formal regional coordination mechanism if they felt that the size and complexity of the area warranted multiple MPOs. As a result, the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and the Sarasota/Manatee MPO (Figure 8) agreed to formalize and solidify joint regional cooperation. They entered into an interlocal agreement overseeing a formalized process for joint regional transportation planning and coordination in 2004.

Following the 2010 Census, FDOT sent another letter to the two MPOs requesting that they again consider consolidating. The Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and the Sarasota/Manatee MPO responded to the FDOT letter on July 9, 2013, agreeing to continue with joint regional coordination rather than consolidating.

### ***Organizational Structure***

The Governing Boards of the two MPOs meet at least once a year, with the chair and location alternating on a rotating basis, to address regional transportation planning issues. Staff members from both of these MPOs participate in the CUTS quarterly meetings, enhancing coordination between these two MPOs and their neighbors.

This collaboration does not typically rely on consultants. In the past, the collaboration has enlisted the help of a consultant once and when those services were needed, a joint funding interlocal agreement was used for that purpose.

### ***Projects in Progress and Completed***

The Sarasota/Manatee MPO and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPOs agreed to include a Joint Regional LRTP Component in each MPO's LRTP. This involved the identification and designation of the Joint Regional Multi-Modal Transportation System as a component of each MPO's 2035 LRTP and specifically identified regionally significant corridors and facilities. The Joint Regional Multi-Modal System was completed and approved by the respective MPO Boards in December 2005. The identified regional transportation system

has been refined several times since 2005 based on changing land use and socioeconomic conditions. The 2035 Joint Regional LRTP Component also relies on the Sarasota-Manatee-Charlotte Travel Demand Model to project future travel demand through 2035. The 2035 Joint Regional LRTP, other documents, activities, and projects of regional significance are listed in Table 20.

<b>Table 20: Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO Documents, Activities, and Construction Projects</b>	
<i>Document/Activity/Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Joint Regional Transportation Model	Completed
Joint Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Component	Completed
Joint annual identification of regional project priorities	Ongoing
Joint Annual Regional TRIP Project Priority List	Ongoing
Joint Annual Regional Trails Project Priority List	Ongoing
River Road corridor improvements	Ongoing

### **Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014**

SR 776 serves as an important east-west connection between Port Charlotte and the rest of Charlotte County. According to projections, population and employment will continue to increase in this area creating higher traffic volumes. SR 776 plays an important role in this region as a hurricane evacuation route and the widening will not only relieve congestion, it will also create a more effective emergency evacuation route. This project and one other project of regional significance were prioritized and are listed in Table 21.

<b>Table 21: Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Sarasota/Manatee MPO 2013-2014 Prioritized Projects</b>	
<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
Widen SR 776 to 6 lanes	3.1 Miles
US 41 intersection improvements	

## **Collier County MPO and Lee County MPO**

### **History**

Based on the 2000 Census, the former Naples Urbanized Area (in Collier County) grew to include the Bonita Springs area of Lee County and is now designated as the Bonita Springs Urbanized Area. The result was that the urbanized area covered by the Collier County MPO (including Naples) expanded into the metropolitan planning area of the Lee County MPO (including Bonita Springs). The residents of these two counties increasingly travel to live, shop, and work without regard to the political boundary that separates them. The resulting increase in inter-county trips over the past several years is a trend that is expected to continue.



**Figure 9 Map of the Collier County MPO and Lee County MPO Alliance**

In February 2002, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation sent a letter asking the Collier County MPO and the Lee County MPO (Figure 9) to consider consolidating. Alternatively, the letter asked the MPOs to develop a formal regional coordination mechanism if they felt that the size and complexity of the area warranted multiple MPOs. In 2002, at a joint board meeting, the two MPOs agreed that they should not pursue consolidation of the MPOs or alter their metropolitan planning boundary. Instead, the two MPOs directed staff to develop a joint resolution for coordinated

transportation planning and policy activities in the bi-county region to promote regional transportation solutions and enhance overall regional transportation system efficiency. The joint resolution was adopted by the Collier County MPO on February 14, 2003 and by the Lee County MPO on March 21, 2003.

Following the 2010 Census, FDOT sent the MPOs a letter on January 11, 2013 requesting that the MPOs reconsider consolidation. The MPOs chose to remain separate entities and at the request of FDOT, decided to re-designate their existing planning boundaries. Accordingly, a resolution to that effect was adopted at the joint MPO Board meeting on March 22, 2013.

### ***Organizational Structure***

Annually, each MPO hosts at least one joint MPO Policy Board meeting, a joint Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, a joint Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting, and a joint Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordination Committee and Pathways Advisory Committee meeting to consider issues of regional significance. Since 2006, the joint MPO Policy Board has been meeting twice a year on a rotating basis between member MPOs. Each MPO also has a staff member that serves as a voting member on the other's TAC to ensure coordination of regional transportation planning activities. The Lee County MPO and Collier County MPO collaboration does not use consulting services for joint activities or projects. However, projects of a similar nature have been contracted out separately by each MPO using the same consultant (for example, the development of the individual components of the 2035 LRTP and the Goods and Freight Mobility Study).

Staff members from both MPOs participate in the CUTS quarterly meetings as previously discussed in the section describing the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee County MPO collaboration, enhancing coordination between these two MPOs and their neighbors.

### **Projects in Progress and Completed**

A PD&E study was completed and the planning and design phases have begun for the widening of SR 82. The project consists of widening a 23 mile section of SR 82 to 4 and eventually 6 lanes. The 23 mile segment has been divided into 7 smaller sections for the design and construction phases of the project. FDOT has encouraged property owners, business owners, and others who use the road to provide input during the design phase of this project.

The I-75 Airport Direct Connect project will provide access from I-75 to the Southwest Florida International Airport. Using new northbound and southbound parallel lanes, the traffic on I-75 will be able to seamlessly transition onto Terminal Access Road and the entrance to the airport. Motorists and freight leaving the airport will be able to experience the same seamless connection when returning to the Interstate. The project is expected to be completed in spring 2015.

In an effort to improve regional coordination in transportation planning, the Lee County MPO and Collier County MPO decided to use a joint public participation process and the joint Lee/Collier (LC) model to develop the 2035 LRTP update. The purpose of the 2035 LRTP update is meant to promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of a cost feasible intermodal transportation system within each of the MPOs. Those systems will serve the mobility needs of people and freight within and through the urbanized areas. The 2035 LRTP update includes long range and short range strategies applicable to each MPO that are consistent with state and local goals and objectives. These documents and projects along with other regionally significant documents, activities, and projects are listed in Table 22.

<b>Table 22: Collier County MPO/Lee County MPO Documents, Activities, and Construction Projects</b>	
<i>Document/Activity/Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Bi-County Regional Transportation and Pathway Network	Completed
Goods and Freight Mobility Study Component	Completed
I-75 Airport Direct Connect	Under Construction
I-75 widening and interchange improvements	Under Construction
Joint Annual Trip Priorities List	Ongoing
Joint 2035 LRTP Component	Completed
LinC Route 600 Intercity Bus service between Lee and Collier Counties	Completed
Old 41 PD&E Study	In Progress
River of Grass Greenway and SR 82 Shared Use Path	Under Construction
Widen SR 82 to 6 lanes	Under Construction

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### Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014

The Lee County MPO and Collier County MPO alliance developed a TRIP Priorities list and Evaluation Criteria to prioritize TRIP projects. Candidate projects are analyzed according to 10 different criteria and ranked on a scale accordingly. Projects earned 10 points if they relieved a failing primary SIS facility by greater than 10%, for example, but only earned 6 points for relieving the same facility between 5% and 10%. The criteria are as follows:

- Project or new transit service is on SIS facility or relieves a SIS facility
- Project provides connectivity to a SIS facility
- County Enterprise Zones, Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern
- Subject to local government ordinance that establishes corridor management techniques
- Production readiness
- Whether or not the project has received TRIP funding in the past
- Job access and economic stimulus
- Performance on previous TRIP projects
- Percentage of funds matched by local, regional, private, and federal agencies
- Whether the project encourages public-private partnership

The Trip Priorities list for the Lee County MPO and the Collier County MPO is available in Table 23.

<b>Table 23: Collier County MPO/Lee County MPO 2013-2014 Prioritized Projects</b>	
<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
Abel Canal PD&E	
Winkler Canal Pathway Feasibility Study	
Construction of CAT Transfer Station/Operations Center	
Widen SR 78 to 4 lanes	2 Miles
US 41 and Collier Blvd. intersection improvements	
Bus shelter construction, transfer station construction, and passenger amenity upgrades for LeeTran	
I-75 interchange improvements at Colonial Blvd.	
SR 80 PD&E Study	
Widen Burnt Store Road	4 Miles
Widen Collier Blvd.	3 Miles
SIS Priority List	
Regional Pathway Project	

## Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO

### History

The 2000 US Census resulted in the merger of several urbanized areas in Florida. As previously discussed in the section describing the formation of the Treasure Coast Transportation Council (TCTC), the two urbanized areas of Fort Pierce and Stuart were merged into the Port St. Lucie urbanized area in Martin and St. Lucie Counties. FDOT sent a letter to Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO (Figure 10) in 2003 requesting that the

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two MPOs either consolidate or identify how the current planning process could be enhanced. In 2006, the Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO jointly adopted a cost-feasible regional long-range transportation plan (RLRTP) for the two-county area instead of adopting separate LRTPs for each MPO. This Joint RLRTP was developed independently of the TCTC and the Indian River County MPO.



**Figure 10 Map of the Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO Alliance**

Following the 2010 Census, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) sent a letter in January 2013 requesting that the St. Lucie TPO, the Martin MPO, and Indian River County MPO evaluate whether having multiple MPOs representing the shared and contiguous urbanized areas continues to be warranted. FDOT requested that the three MPOs either consolidate or identify how the current coordinated planning process can be enhanced. Although consolidation was considered, in the end the Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO (along with the

Indian River County MPO) opted to remain separate entities. The MPOs did, however, agree to enhance their coordinated planning processes.

### ***Organizational Structure***

Following the 2000 Census, the Martin MPO and the St. Lucie TPO agreed to increase and formalize coordination activities through their activities in the TCTC and by providing one another with two ex-officio, non-voting seats on their respective governing boards. Additionally, each MPO has non-voting representation on the other MPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The St. Lucie TPO/Martin MPO Joint Board meets as needed with administrative duties performed on a rotating basis between the MPOs.

### ***Projects in Progress and Completed***

The 2035 Joint RLRTP update was completed in 2011 and is the only joint LRTP in the State. The 2035 RLRTP addresses travel demands on the transportation network spanning the two counties. This plan update was developed independently of the TCTC and the Indian River County MPO. A regional multimodal transportation network (including facilities, corridors, and centers) was defined and projects were identified by the joint MPO Governing Board and Advisory Committee to address regional LRTP system needs including highway transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. In addition, the RLRTP contained provisions for a joint decision-making process related to developing regional transportation priorities. Throughout the development of the 2035 Joint LRTP, the two MPOs conducted joint MPO Governing Board and Advisory Committee meetings

and joint public outreach efforts. The Joint RL RTP establishes a regional voice articulating transportation priorities and funding, enhancing information sharing between the MPOs, and creating a joint transportation decision-making process. The 2035 Joint RL RTP update and other documents of regional significance are listed in Table 24.

<b>Table 24: Martin MPO/St. Lucie TPO Documents, Activities, and Construction Projects</b>	
<i>Document/Activity/Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
2035 Joint Regional Long Range Transportation Plan	Completed
Regional Transit Development Plan	Completed
Transit Authority Action Plan	Completed

**Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014**

The St. Lucie TPO and Martin MPO each individually developed a list of prioritized projects for fiscal year 2013-2014. They jointly concluded that none of the projects on their individual lists were of regional significance and agreed to forego the development of a joint regional prioritized projects list for that fiscal year.

**Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWFLRTPO)**

**History**

Prior to the 2000 Census, the metropolitan planning boundary of the Pensacola MPO (renamed the Florida-Alabama TPO in 2004) included the urbanized portions of Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. The metropolitan planning boundary of the Fort

Walton Beach MPO (renamed the Okaloosa-Walton TPO in 2002) included the urbanized portions of Okaloosa and Walton Counties and extended only very slightly into Santa Rosa County. The 2000 Census redefined the urbanized areas of the two TPOs as growing toward each other with the Fort Walton Beach urbanized area extending further into the metropolitan planning area of the Florida-Alabama TPO. Increasingly, residents of this four county area make inter-county trips to work, shop, and play without regard to political boundaries.



**Figure 11 Map of NWFLRTPO Member MPOs**

Recognizing the increasingly close relationship among the four counties, the FDOT wrote a letter in 2003 requesting that the Florida-Alabama TPO and the Okaloosa-Walton TPO (Figure 11) either consolidate or develop a consultative process to incorporate institutional and process improvements to address regional transportation issues at the

TPO level. As a result, the two TPOs entered into an interlocal agreement in 2004 to form the Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWFLRTPO).

### **Organizational Structure**

There are sixteen voting representatives on the NWFLRTPO Governing Board – eight from each of the two member TPOs. The Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, District 3 and the chairperson of the Eglin Air Force Base Encroachment Committee are non-voting representatives of the NWFLRTPO Governing Board.

The NWFLRTPO meets quarterly in a regionally central location, usually in unincorporated Navarre, Florida. The West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC) provides staff support to the Florida-Alabama TPO, the Okaloosa-Walton TPO, and to the NWFLRTPO. The NWFLRTPO is also supported by a technical working group comprised of members of the MPO Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) from both MPOs. NWFLRTPO has used consultation services in the past, particularly on the development of the Feasibility Study of Advance Funding of Transportation Capacity Projects which was adopted in December of 2010.

### **Projects in Progress and Completed**

The Mid-Bay Bridge Connector is a limited access highway that will connect the north end of the Mid-Bay Bridge with SR 85 just north of the City of Niceville, Florida. This connector will provide shorter travel times to Niceville, the surrounding coastal communities, and areas east of Niceville. The connector, equipped with electronic open-road tolling, will enable motor vehicles to avoid the 14 traffic signals that exist along the current route through Niceville. The connector will also assist in relieving congestion and offer an improved evacuation route. This project and other documents, activities, and projects of regional significance are listed in Table 25.

<b>Table 25: NWFLRTPO Documents, Activities, and Construction Projects</b>	
<i>Document/Activity/Construction Project</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Feasibility Study of Advance Funding of Transportation Capacity Projects	Completed
I-110 interchange improvements	Under Construction
Mid-Bay Bridge Connector	Under Construction
Regional Transportation Network Priorities FY 2011-2015	Completed
SR 123/SR 85 South interchange improvements	Under Construction
Widen SR 20	Under Construction
Widen SR 281	Under Construction
Widen US 331	Under Construction

### **Projects Prioritized for 2013-2014**

The NWFLRTPO developed a Regional Transportation Network Priorities document for the 2011-2015 fiscal years. This document uses regional network 11 different criteria to identify regionally significant transportation facilities and services. Those network priorities are then organized into SIS, non-SIS, and Alternative Funding projects and

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listed in order of importance. The projects prioritized in the Regional Transportation Network Priorities document are listed in Table 26.

<b>Table 26: NWFLRTPO 2013-2014 Prioritized Projects:</b>	
<i>Prioritized Project</i>	<i>Extent</i>
Widen SR 281 (Avalon Blvd.)	2.5 Miles
Widen US 29	2.1 Miles
Widen US 90A (9 Mile Road)	5.8 Miles
Widen SR 123	4.6 Miles
US 98 Capacity Improvements	
US 90 Capacity Improvements	
Widen SR 87	10 Miles
Widen US 331	8.8 Miles

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## **Observations and Conclusions**

This research details how alliances of MPOs (in pairs of MPOs and in groups of three or more MPOs) across Florida have taken advantage of the opportunity provided in Florida law to plan on a scale covering multiple MPO areas. Some of the alliances have primarily used this opportunity as a mechanism to attract Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding for regionally significant transportation projects. Others have used the opportunity to conduct a broader planning process that focuses on a variety of planning activities including long range planning, priority setting and public involvement.

The MPO pairs in Florida are all formed by interlocal agreements, but tend to otherwise not be formalized in terms of organizational structure, procedure or planning activities. The MPO alliances of three or more MPOs are, on the other hand, both formed by interlocal agreement and are more formalized in their organizational structures, procedures and planning requirements. They often have regularly scheduled meetings, provide for staffing, maintain websites, engage consultants to perform planning activities/studies and produce specific planning products as called for in their agency bylaws and procedures. However, they have each taken unique approaches to achieve these institutional activities. Table 27 summarizes the organizational structures, procedures and planning requirements of the MPO alliances.

**Table 27 Summary of MPO Alliances (of three or more)**

	West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC)	Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA)	Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC)	Treasure Coast Transportation Council (TCTC)
Number of MPOs	6	6	3	3
Voting Membership	7 (One representative from each MPO & 1 Representative from Citrus TPO)	18 (3 representatives from each MPO)	3 (1 representative from each MPO)	6 (Chair and Vice-Chair from each MPO Board)
Non-Voting Membership	8 (FDOT Districts 1 & 7, Florida Turnpike Enterprise, Central Florida RPC, Southwest Florida RPC, Withlacoochee RPC, Tampa Bay RPC, & TBARTA)	3 (FDOT District 1 & 5, & Florida Turnpike Enterprise)	0	3 (FDOT District 4, Florida Turnpike Enterprise, & Treasure Coast Planning Council)
Meeting Frequency	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Annually
MPO Staff Director Meeting Frequency	Bi-Weekly	As Needed	Monthly	As Needed
Committees	JCAC, Multi-Use Trails, & Technical Review Team	No	RTTAC, Modeling Subcommittee, Regional Freight Subcommittee, & Regional Public Involvement Management Team	No
Conflict Resolution Process	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Regional LRTP	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Regional Project Priorities List	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Staffing	TBARTA provides staff support and the meeting chair rotates between members	MetroPlan Orlando provides staff support	Staff support is provided by a consulting firm	Member MPOs perform administrative duties on a rotating basis
Use of Consultants	No	No	Yes	No
Website	regionaltransportation.org	seftc.org	metroplanorlando.com /partnership/central-florida-mpo-alliance/	Each member MPO provides information about the TCTC on their website